THE

NUMERICAL BIBLE

BEING

A REVISED TRANSLATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Arranged, Divided, and Briefly Characterized

ACCORDING TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THEIR

NUMERICAL STRUCTURE

THE GOSPELS

THIRD EDITION

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PREFACE.

IN sending out the present volume of the Numerical Bible, it is a joy to realize that it is another witness to that which in our day is assailed on every hand, the absolute perfection of the Inspired Word. This very perfection renders, indeed, every testimony of this kind so feeble in comparison that it must make every attempt to show it forth in some sense a matter of humiliation. It will ever remain its own only-competent witness; and a large part of our work has to be simply the removal of that which through the incompetence of its friends, much more than the wanton malice of its foes, has obscured for many the light which shines forth from it. Nor can one pretend that even while seeking to do this, there may not be the adding of fresh mistakes to the number of those that have gone before. One's comfort only can be that after all, it is the nature of light to shine; and that that which has this self-evidence for oneself may be trusted to manifest it also to the eyes of others. The perfection of the Word cannot of course be demonstrated by that which is confessedly itself imperfect; yet so much may be seen as to produce conviction in the soul as to what is not seen. We have the highest witness that can be, that "Scripture cannot be broken;" and it is joy to know that every attempt to show the contrary has always resulted in ampler confirmation of its truth. But there is more than this: for God has ordained that we should in the reception of even the Word of truth, be helpers to one another; and thus it is that the Spirit of God testifies to our need of one another, and to His own abiding Presence in the Church. I have for my own part sought to keep this in mind, and have not willingly neglected any available means of knowledge. My indebtedness to those who have gone before me is far too great to be even realized, much as I have desired, without despising any help, to read Scripture for myself in dependence on that "Unction from the Holy One," by which even the "babes" may be delivered from helpless dependence upon any mere human teacher. That those who take up the present volume may do it in this spirit also is my heartfelt desire.

The references are here, as in all these volumes, the work of Mr. SAMUEL RIDOUT, to whom its readers, with myself, are also indebted for many helpful suggestions as to the translation, as in other ways.

F. W. GRANT.

Plainfield, N. J.
June, 1899.

ORDER AND DIVISIONS OF THE BOOKS.

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

1. THE BOOKS OF THE LAW:—
   1. Genesis.
   2. Exodus.
   3. Leviticus.
   4. Numbers.
   5. Deuteronomy.

2. THE COVENANT-HISTORY:—
   1. Joshua.
   2. Judges.
      Ruth.
   3. Kings:—
      First Book (*Samuel*).
      Second Book (*Kings*).
   4. Captivity-Books:—
      Ezra.
      Nehemiah.
      Esther.
   5. Chronicles.

3. THE PROPHETS:—
   1. Isaiah.
   2. Jeremiah.
      Lamentations.
   3. Ezekiel.
   4. Daniel.
   5. The Book of Minor Prophets:—
      1. *Hosea.*, *Amos.*, *Micah.*
      2. *Joel.*, *Obadiah.*, *Jonah.*
      3. *Nahum.*, *Habakkuk.*, *Zephaniah.*
      4. *Haggai.*, *Zechariah.*, *Malachi.*

4. THE PSALM-BOOKS:—
   1. The Psalms.
   2. Job.
   3. Solomon's Song.
   4. Ecclesiastes.
   5. Proverbs.

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

1. THE GOSPELS:—
   1. Matthew., Mark., Luke.
   2. John.

2. THE ACTS.

3. THE PAULINE EPISTLES:—
   1. Romans.
      Galatians.
      Ephesians.
      Colossians.
      Philemon.
      Philippians.
   2. Thessalonians.
      First Epistle.
      Second Epistle.
      Corinthians.
      First Epistle.
      Second Epistle.
      Hebrews.
      Timothy.
      First Epistle.
      Second Epistle.
      Titus.

4. THE CATHOLIC EPISTLES:—
   1. Peter.
      First Epistle.
      Second Epistle.
   2. James.
   3. John.
      First Epistle.
      Second Epistle.
      Third Epistle.
   4. Jude.

5. REVELATION.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NUMERALS.

The reason for the significance must be sought in previous volumes, especially in Appendix II. to the Volume on the Psalms.

ONE.

Soleness, singularity, uniqueness; solitariness, barrenness.
Sufficiency, power, independency, pride, rebellion.
Identity, unchangeableness, consistency, perpetuity, truth, knowledge.

(UNITY.)

Unity, at-oneness, harmony, congruity, integrity, righteousness, obedience, concord, peace.

(PRIMACY.)

Supremacy, headship, rule; beginning, cause, occasion, source, foundation, ground, plea.

(COMBINATIONS OF MEANINGS.)

Life, personality, will. Choice, election. Grace.
God, Almighty, Eternal, Jehovah, Father.

TWO.

(RELATION.)

Help, support, confirmation, assurance, competent testimony.
Seconding, preservation, deliverance, salvation. Service, ministry.
Addition, increase, growth; progress, movement, activity.
Attachment, love, desire, prayer. Association, partnership, fellowship.

(SECOND.)

Dependence, faith. Inferiority, lowliness, humiliation, subjection.

(DIFFERENCE.)

Diversity, contrast; contradiction, opposition, conflict, enmity.
Double-mindedness, duplicity, deceit.

(DIVISION.)

Separation, analysis, differentiation, discernment; judgment, wisdom; sight.
Decay, death, dissolution.
Christ, Second Person, God and Man, Second Man, Word of God, Witness, Saviour, Servant, Minister. Cross. Soul. Woman.

THREE.

(THREE DIMENSIONS.)

Solidity; reality, realization, fulfilment, fulness; manifestation. Sanctuary; glory, praise. Name.

(THREE STRAIGHT LINES INCLOSE A SPACE.)

Setting apart for purpose; specialization, sanctification, holiness; transformation. Dwelling-place, possession, portion. Marriage. Ban.

(THIRD LINE OF A TRIANGLE RETURNS TO THE FIRST.)

Resurrection; return, revival, recovery; reproduction. Spirit.

FOUR.

Yieldingness, weakness; meekness, mercy. Failure, testing; experience; transitoriness, change.
Creature, earth, walk on earth, world.

FIVE.

God in government; capacity, responsibility, exercise, way and end; conditions.
Weak with the Strong; Man with God; Immanuel.

SIX.

Manifestation or fulness of evil. Work-day week; limit, discipline; mastery, overcoming.

SEVEN.

Completeness, perfection; rest.

EIGHT.

New in contrast with the Old.

TEN.

Simply a 5 by 2.

TWELVE.

The manifest rule of God.

INTRODUCTION.

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE meaning of the title given to the latter and distinctively Christian portion of the inspired Word is not in dispute. The Greek word (διαθηκη) means both "covenant" and "testament," and apparently in this very relation (compare Heb. ix. 15, 16); though, as in contrast with the "Old Covenant," the law, we naturally find most emphasis laid upon the former significance. "Covenant," says Fausset, "expresses its obligatory character, God having bound Himself by promise. 'Testament' expresses that, unlike other covenants, it is not a matter of bargaining, but all of God's grace, just as a testator has absolute power to do what he will with his own. Jesus' *death* brings the will of God in our favor into force."

Old Covenant and New Covenant are, as law and grace, completely opposed to one another. As the apostle argues, so absolutely is this true here that when the latter comes in the former must give way, to disappear before it (Heb. viii. 13); and yet they are two parts of one testimony, both necessary to the Scripture rule with regard to testimony, and answering, in their very contrast to each other to the inherent reason for its being twofold. "Who that has considered it in the least but must appreciate the power of this for conviction? For such power in twofold witness proceeds largely from the diversity of character and interest that they present. They are otherwise different,—contrasted; yet here they agree: different in such sort that you realize there is no collusion between them,—no treachery. Nothing but the necessary unity of truth could make them one. And how will this be strengthened in proportion as the contrast is manifold, and yet the unity pervasive: and this in the two Testaments is what so demonstrates them to be of God.

"The Old Testament is in Hebrew, the language of a special people, with whose history it has grown up, and to whom it addresses itself. It is the religion of a nation, one of the families of the earth, its horizon earthly, its sanctuary a worldly one, its services ritualistic, ornate,

elaborate, intrusted to a special priesthood. God is here behind a veil which none can penetrate; man—all men—are shut out; none can see Him and live; for, merciful as He is, He cannot clear the guilty, and who (let him do his best) is *not* guilty?

"This legal, sacerdotal, exclusive system, the incarnation of conscience, but a bad conscience, in what utter contrast is it to the free, spiritual, all-embracing spirit of Christianity! 'The Lord has said that He would dwell in the thick darkness,' says Solomon on the day of the dedication of the temple. (1 Kings viii. 12.) 'We walk in the light as God is in the light,' answers the apostle. (1 Jno. i. 7.) 'Who can by no means clear the guilty,' says the Old Testament voice. (Ex. xxxiv. 7.) 'That justifieth the ungodly,' says again the New Testament. (Rom. iv. 5.) 'No man can see Me and live,' is the elder utterance. (Ex. xxxiii. 20.) 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father,' are His words who is Himself the spirit incarnate of the New. (Jno. xiv. 9.)

"Here are two witnesses how diverse: can it be that, after all, under these statements, so seemingly conflicting, there is yet a perfect unity? can there be a fullness of truth which embraces and harmonizes all? Yes, surely; admit what the Old Testament so abundantly confirms and illustrates, the essential opposition between law and grace, yet that the first is handmaid to the other;—then, on the basis of law, all the Old Testament utterances are but the sentence of God upon the self-righteousness of man; while the New Testament reveals the heart of God in grace, upon the basis of a righteousness, by which the law also is magnified and made honorable, and able to forego its penal claim."*

Thus this diverse testimony is all the more conclusive for being diverse. And the number two in itself speaks of diversity, as is plain. The foundation also of the new covenant or New Testament is the Cross; and the Cross receives and unites these diverse elements. It is curse and blessing,—the curse of the law taken and removed. It is humiliation and glory. It is the sin of man at its worst, and the love of God in its fullest display. The shed blood of Christ is the "blood of the new covenant," and the cup at His supper is "the new covenant (or testament) in His blood." (Matt. xxvi. 28; Lu. xxii. 20.) Thus the New Testament holds up the Cross as its emblem; and from Matthew to Revelation it is ever before us.

Clearly, the New Testament stands as a second part of the Bible, in contrast with yet confirmation and interpretation of the first. It is the substance of former shadows, but thus also in contrast with them. It is for men at large instead of a single nation; for the family of faith, who are now as such brought into a place of recognized relationship with God, and as called out of the world become a heavenly and not an earthly people.

* "Spiritual Law in the Natural World," pp. 32–34.

But it is also a *fifth Pentateuch*, the Old Testament being made up of four Pentateuchs, as we have elsewhere seen. Nor is this number 5 in contradiction to the other number which it bears: for every 5 is also a two: it is made up of two numbers 4+1, and these two are in perfect contrast with one another, though coming thus together. Four is the number of frailty—of the creature. One is the number of strength and of God. Five brings these together in itself, and is the number of Immanuel therefore—"God with us"* This is surely the very meaning of the new covenant: "I will be their God;" and our Immanuel, Jesus, is the personal fulfillment of it. He is the "Mediator of the new covenant," the Reconciler of God and man. Thus, as a fifth Pentateuch, the New Testament is perfectly in agreement with its character as the second part of Scripture. The numbers two and five both speak of Jesus, and as no other numbers do. It is no wonder that here they should come together. For Scripture has its own arithmetic as Nature has: and nothing that is, save man, can be ever wanting in its Maker's praise.

The Pentateuchal Structure.

Taking up the New Testament now, to look deeper into it, we find it has twenty-seven books in all, as the Old Testament has really thirty-six; the three double historical books of the latter being not originally so divided.† The one is therefore 3×12; the other is 3^3. The number of revelation (or divine manifestation), 3, enters into both; but in the Old Testament it is in connection with the number of manifest government: it is God upon the throne throughout, as "Law" means; whereas in the New Testament we have only the 3 itself, but *cubed*, which speaks of solidity—*of contents*. God is manifest all through; there are no clouds and darkness round about Him, to hide the glory of what He is: He is "Light," and He is "*in* the light."

Thus as the manifestation of God to man, Father, Son and Spirit are now fully revealed. Beautifully we find this first, where, at His baptism by John, Christ comes forward to take up His work among men,—the whole Godhead in wondrous fellowship in that salvation.

Answering to this also, and as the necessary response on man's part, the full sanctification of the Spirit is announced and realized. The things which Moses had to suffer for the hardness of men's hearts are now refused: "perfection" has in this sense come, that which "made nothing perfect" has (dispensationally) passed away.

Thus the numerals still bring out the character of what is here before us. But there is more than this: for these twenty-seven books fall into five divisions,—in fact a Pentateuch, of Gospels, Acts, Pauline epistles, Catholic epistles, Revelation. The divisions are not based upon their

* See the appendix for all numerical symbolism; or the former volumes.

† The division is due to the Septuagint.

form: for, in that case, the Gospels and Acts would go together as history, just as the Pauline and Catholic would all be epistles. There are epistles also in the book of Revelation. It is plain that we could not, therefore, divide them in this way; we must look more deeply into what is so presented to us, and then we shall find that they are a Pentateuch in contents as well as form, and that the structure is here as elsewhere in Scripture, throughout numerical.

1. The Gospels.

The Gospels are, in that case, of course, the Genesis. They are the new "beginning," which the apostle John in his first epistle refers to constantly as that. In Christ, "that Eternal Life which was with the Father" shines here, without fleck or stain,—"the Light of men." Head of new creation, He is the "Father of eternity"—of that which, as approved of God, abides. The Gospels are the foundation upon which the whole superstructure of Christian truth is reared, and they have always opened the canon of the New Testament. No other place would be possible to them at all.

2. The Acts.

As indisputably as the Gospels are the Genesis, the book of the Acts is the Exodus of the New Testament. It is that redemption from legal bondage of the people of God, (not now a nation but the family of faith,) of which the epistle to the Galatians speaks doctrinally. In the Acts we have the history of the deliverance, the large part of it being taken up with the labors of Paul, the instrument mainly used of God in bringing it about. Beginning with Jerusalem and its rejection of the risen and ascended Christ, it shows us thereupon the reception of the Samaritans, and then of the Gentiles in the persons of Cornelius and his household; the apostle of the circumcision being made to open the door to them. We have then the conversion of Saul, the scattering of the Jerusalem saints by persecution, the new Gentile assembly formed at Antioch, and the going forth from thence of Saul and Barnabas on their mission to the nations.

The question is then raised, Is the law to put its yoke upon these new converts? and that is decided in the negative at Jerusalem itself. The second missionary journey of the apostle follows, the Gentile work enlarging continually. But the Jewish disciples are still zealous for the law, and from the hostility of the unbelievers in Jerusalem the apostle of the Gentiles finds refuge only in a Roman prison. The last chapter narrates the final interview of the apostle with the Jews at Rome, closing with his definitive word, that "the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it."

3. The Epistles of Paul.

The order of the epistles varies somewhat in different MSS.; and in the east, as it would seem, the epistles styled "catholic," because not

addressed to any distinct churches or individuals, preceded those of Paul. In the west, on the other hand, the order was in this respect as found in our common Bibles.

But if the numerical (and Pentateuchal) system has any claim to be considered divine, the Pauline epistles, and not the Catholic, must stand as the third division of the New Testament books. Paul it is who by his doctrine establishes the soul before God, opening for us the heavenly sanctuary itself, to bring us in there in the Person of our Representative, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is thus, as he claims to be (Col. i. 23) in an especial sense the minister of the gospel; which answers to the place in which we have seen him in the Acts. He is in fact the first to proclaim "justification," as recorded in the Acts itself (xiii. 39), going beyond the forgiveness of sins, as preached by the other apostles; and both this and the Christian place in Christ he alone of all the Scripture writers formally declares.

As it is Leviticus that gives typically the different features of the Lord's great offering, the measure of our acceptance and sanctification to God, so it is Paul who interprets this into the plain speech of the New Testament. His epistles are evidently, then, the third division.

But he claims to be not simply "minister"* of the gospel, but of the Church also as the body of Christ (verse 25), of which again no one but himself speaks; and even its character as the house of God, indwelt of the Spirit, it is his fully to bring out: in both respects the effect of the coming of the Spirit, as found in Christianity. Every way, therefore, he fills the third place.

4. The Catholic Epistles.

On the other hand, the "catholic" or general epistles, are the work of *four* writers (Peter, James, John and Jude), and in this have the numerical stamp of their division. They have also all as their theme that practical path through the world which is brought out typically in the book of Numbers, and which comes under the number four. This is not hard to be realized as to them, while in many respects they are quite diverse from each other. For this reason I shall defer any further characterization of them until we may, in the goodness of God, be called to consider them in detail.

5. The Revelation.

And so we come now to Revelation, the one book of New Testament prophecy, but which goes entirely beyond the Old. In the Old Testament, however, prophecy is a third division, not a fifth,—a place which it fills here for a very beautiful and obvious reason.

In the Old Testament prophecy alone could lead the people of God

* We must not read merely "a" minister in either of the verses in question (Col. i. 23, 25); for he is speaking of the special dispensation committed to him.

into things which could not yet be proclaimed as present. Even then they could be only feebly entered into: as Isaiah says: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." But the apostle quoting this, can add for his Christian hearers: "but God hath revealed them unto *us* by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.)

Most fittingly, therefore, do the epistles of Paul, in which the fullness of such truth is given,—truth which opens heaven itself for us, as even Old Testament prophecy could not do—take the place in the New Testament held by prophecy in the Old. But the place of Revelation itself is none the less a significant and blessed one. On the one hand, it is indeed a Deuteronomy, a magnificent summing up, solemn, yet glorious, of the divine ways with man and in view of man's ways; of the history of the Church and of the world alike; while beyond—as Israel from the plains of Moab could view their inheritance—our glorious city, the heavenly Jerusalem, is shown us. And there, and by and by upon the new earth also, "God with us," the full power of the name Immanuel, is seen in accomplished blessing. From this side also the closing book of prophecy fills completely its numerical place.

THE TIME BETWEEN THE TESTAMENTS.

The New Testament, as every one knows, was not given in quiet continuity with the Old. Inspiration had long lapsed, and after Malachi no prophet had arisen in Israel for over 400 years, when suddenly the "Messenger" before Jehovah, of whom he had spoken, broke the long silence, preaching in the wilderness of Judea. There had been much and stirring history, and Israel herself had seemed for awhile to have a resurrection in the kingdom of the Maccabees. But it had proved, as to the nation, to be but as the galvanizing of a corpse, which does not preserve it from increasing corruption. The sceptre, which from the prophetic point of view had never been a legitimate one, tumbled helplessly at last into the hands of the open usurper and Edomite, Herod; and it was in a land under his cruel sway that the true King was born.

Prophecy had already fixed the time of His coming, in the "seventy weeks" foretold to Daniel, which must be given up as a genuine prediction, if Christ were not the "Messiah the Prince," therein declared. The general expectation also fastened itself upon this or similar predictions. "That 'the testimony of Jesus was the Spirit of prophecy,'" says Geikie,* "was only the Christian utterance of a universal Jewish belief respecting the Christ. 'All the prophets,' says Rabbi Chaja, 'have prophesied only of the blessedness of the days of the Messiah.' But it was to Daniel especially, with his seeming exactness of dates, that the

* "Life and Words of Christ" (chap. vi.)

chief regard was paid. It was generally believed that the 'times' of that prophet pointed to the 20th year of Herod the great, and when that was past, not to mention other dates, the year 67 of our reckoning was thought the period, and then the year 135; the war which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem arising from one calculation, and the tremendous insurrection under Hadrian from the other."

Alas, they had not known Messiah when He came; and the forfeiting in this way, for so many generations, of all their hopes, the prophet had fully declared. He would "be cut off, and have nothing" (verse 26, *marg.*); and the destruction of the city and the sanctuary would follow, as it did follow, as the result.

The rejection of Christ was the inevitable consequence of the self-righteousness in which the people were steeped. They had rejected the testimony of the old covenant against them, and the judgment of God because of the breach of it; on account of which they were already scattered in all lands, and in their own were under the feet of the heathen. The very temple to which they outwardly devoted themselves, and which had been rebuilt by the bloody hands of the unscrupulous tyrant Herod (contrast the prohibition of David from building it because he was a man of war) bore witness against them in its empty sanctuary. There was no ark of the covenant within the veil—no true mercy-seat, therefore, on which the blood of the covenant could be sprinkled on the day of atonement,—no "Urim and Thummim," by which the high-priest obtained answers from God—finally, no manifestation of God at all in connection with it. It was round this hollow shell that all the ritualistic system now revolved,—a type of the heartless formalism of the mass of the people.

The sentence of Lo-ammi was upon the nation (Hos. i. 9), and it was in strange but real accordance with this that never did they value themselves so highly. In the measure of one's distance from God is this self-estimation practicable, and we see by the Baptist's warning words to them how far in this way they had attained. The higher their religious claim, the more emphatically would they refuse also alike the stern preacher of repentance and the evangelist of divine grace. Thus the Pharisee could ask with assurance as to the answer, "Which of the Pharisees have believed on Him?" and with perfect conviction that that settled the matter as to the claim of Him whom they refused.

Thus to the condemnation of the broken law they added the condemnation of a rejected Gospel; to the "ungodly and without strength" which the former proved as to them, they added the last and worst count of the indictment against men, "the carnal mind is enmity against God." (Rom. v. 6; viii. 7.)

The Cross was thus in this sense the end of the trial of man, the "end of the" (probationary) "ages" (Heb. ix. 26, *Gk.*) but only leaving God to show Himself now, as man had done himself. The world lies

indeed under its shadow; but God is in the light, and the eternal counsels—the mind and heart of God—are told out in the new revelation of Christ, His manifestation.

The Cross itself lay in this gap of time between two revelations; the new revelation waited, as far as its Scriptures were concerned, for the advent of the witnessing Spirit, the Witness of the glory of Christ in His accomplished work. His coming into the world to take the place of the absent Christ, marked at its commencement with the abundant bestowal of spiritual gifts, but perfectly distinct from this, is what characterizes for us the new epoch. And the promise of the Lord in connection with His coming, "He shall guide you into all truth," is emphasized by the apostle as in present accomplishment: "the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. ii. 10.)

This slight indication may suffice to introduce us to what we shall have almost immediately to look at more in detail under the guidance of the inspired Word. I shall not here anticipate what will be much better treated in this connection. The object we have before us is not a history, but (if I may call it so) an inductive study of the word of God. We shall, for this, commence with as few presuppositions as possible, and, even in the statement of facts, while not neglecting any sources of help that may be open to us, shall let these come into use, as Scripture itself may suggest. Wisdom is in them as well as knowledge, and we desire that it may make its impression upon us, and that all our thoughts may be absolutely moulded by it. We come now at once therefore to the study of the Gospels.

THE GOSPELS.

It is simple enough to understand why the books which give us the fourfold history of the Lord's life on earth should be called by way of eminence the "Gospels." The opening words of Mark may have given rise to it, and be its formal justification; but apart from this, all the *facts* which the gospel proclaims and in which it is inwrapped are here. The development and application we find afterwards rather; and yet the man who was above all intrusted with this, at the beginning of that which is the most elaborate statement of the "glad tidings" to be found in Scripture, carries us back to what is recorded in the Gospels, for that which he preached (Rom. i. 3, 4): "the gospel of God concerning His Son Jesus Christ, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by resurrection of the dead." These things remain ever the gospel, however great the development may be afterwards.

That there would be such development, the Lord Himself plainly assures His disciples: "I have many things to say to you, but ye

cannot bear them now; howbeit, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all truth . . He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you" (Jno. xvi. 12–14).

We see then that it is mere unbelief of the Gospels which would make men turn from the words of the Apostles to find their all even in the words of the Lord Himself. It is the Lord who assures us that things which could not be uttered by Himself would be uttered afterwards; and that these would be still, moreover, His own things. In the Gospels we find the germinant truths and facts, which imply all else; but it would be impossible for any less qualified than the apostles to have developed them. The history of this in measure we have in the Acts: enough to show us that it did in fact take place, and that it was even a slower process than we would have imagined. As to doctrines, Paul was given to complete* the word of God" (Col. i. 25); and only in Colossians and Ephesians, from his prison at Rome, does he seem to do this.

On the one hand, if we must not expect in the Gospels the fullness of Christian doctrine, on the other we must not limit them to the expression of what is distinctively Christian. It is again Paul himself who reminds us that the gospel is about One who was "made of the seed of David according to the flesh," and that, as this implies, that He "was minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Rom. xv. 8). We shall find in the Gospels, therefore, Christ in necessary relation to Israel and the fulfilment of the Old Testament predictions as to them,—predictions and promises not set aside by the unbelief of the nation when He came, however much they might be delayed by it. The true understanding of the "Sermon on the Mount" (Matt. v–vii), of the prophecy upon Olivet (Matt. xxiv, xxv), and much else, depends upon the apprehension of this.

We must rid ourselves of the short-sighted and narrow application of everything to our special interests, which has perplexed so long the interpretation of Scripture; or rather, we must lay hold believingly of the astonishing grace which has made all that concerns Christ our interest and communicates as unto "friends" the divine thoughts and counsels which have for their centre Him by whom and for whom all things were made. In this way alone can we get to the heart of revelation anywhere, and find the true Life-centre of the universe of God.

It has been little enough realized till of late, and even now is it too little discerned, that each book in Scripture has its own specific purpose,—its dominant truth or truths, therefore, which give individuality to it, and with which all other truths connect themselves. We apprehend in the works of man the specific purpose of every book and every chapter of a book which is written by him, and yet are slow to credit the Lord with equal distinctiveness of plan and method. The variety

* Or "fill up," not as in the common version, "fulfil."

of the instruments He has been pleased to use has hidden the One author who has used them; and despite the general unity of design which runs through them, we have failed to realize the perfect way in which each fills the place appointed for him. We have scarcely even allowed to the word of God the symmetry of a woman's patchwork,—which is, in fact, the only appropriate figure for the views long current as to the four Gospels, in which each writer was supposed to be making up as best he could the deficiencies of the one preceding him, and, as this implies, with but partial success. No wonder if this suggested to the later critics to apply the patchwork theory to the composition of the individual books,—a task which has been found to be proportionally easier, according to the multiplication of the patches.

For the intelligent Christian, however, such theories of origin are, we may trust, passed away, and we have been returning (at least with regard to the Gospels) to what the faith of Christians anciently accepted as the truth, that each Gospel presents a distinct aspect of the Lord's person and work. It is true, that they strangely differed among themselves about these, and we may even smile at the quaintness and extravagance of some of their arguments; all the more do their conflicting voices seem to represent the uncertain transmissions of some primitive teaching which tradition had been, as usual, unable accurately to preserve. Thus Irenæus "argues that the Gospel is the pillar of the Church; the Church is spread over the whole world; the world has four quarters; therefore it is fitting there should also be four Gospels. Again, the Gospel is the divine breath, or wind of life for men; there are four chief winds: therefore four Gospels. He builds another argument on the fourfold appearance of the cherubim. The cherubim, he says, are fourfold, and their faces are images of the activity of the Son of God. The first beast was like a lion, signifying His commanding and kingly dignity; the second, like a calf, signifying His priestly office; the third like a man, denoting His incarnation; the fourth like an eagle, denoting the Holy Spirit flying over the Church. Like these are the Gospels. John, who begins with the Godhead and descent from the Father, is the lion; Luke, who begins with the priesthood and sacrifice of Zacharias is the calf; Matthew, who begins with His human genealogy is the man; Mark the eagle, who commences with the announcement of the prophetic spirit—"the beginning of the Gospel as it is written by Isaiah the prophet."

Crude enough are these applications, and not one of them really right: John is not the Gospel of the Kingship, but of incarnate Deity. The genealogy in Matthew is not to show the Lord's humanity, but His royal title; the application of the calf to Luke is trivial and wholly wrong; and that of the eagle to Mark no less so. No wonder that Dr. Salmon,* from whom I have quoted, tells us that "this is not the appor-

* "Introduction to the New Testament:" p. 33.

tionment of the four beasts to the Gospels which ultimately prevailed in the West: John being usually represented as the eagle; Matthew as the man; Luke as the ox; and Mark as the lion."

This is better in the first case only; and Lange has amended this, though again with only partial advantage, by regarding "Matthew under the symbol of the ox and Luke under that of the man."

All this would be taken by most as instancing merely the folly of such fanciful comparisons, and Dr. Salmon seems to cite them for this purpose. Yet in fact, the application of the cherubic figures to the Gospels only fails for want of a full induction and strict rigor of argument. The truth in it is fuller than any of the ancients seem to have understood, and lies not in casual or partial resemblances, but touches the essential difference in each of the evangelic histories.

Even the number of the Gospels connects itself with the analogies first pointed out by Irenæus; though that does not guarantee the application made of them. Here we are upon the ground of the numerical structure with which we are already familiar. Four is the number of the world as the place of trial, of the four corners of the earth and the four winds of heaven; and the Lord is seen in the four Gospels in the scene of what He Himself calls His "temptation;" facing the sins and sorrows and needs of men. Himself Man, and hiding Himself from nothing human, all the perfection of His Person is thus revealed to us. He is not only heard but seen, gazed upon, and handled by the hands of men. All forms of proof that can be given are given, that they may know the meaning and certainty of the vision accorded them—of the gift of God that is put into the possession of faith in Him. This is the first necessity for us, not a system of doctrine to be learned, but a living Person to be occupied with. And for this, with scarcely a word of comment, He is made to walk and live before us in an atmosphere of crystalline purity, which never detains or diverts the sight from the one sacred Figure who is to engage our attention and lay hold upon our hearts. All other forms that pass before us are but in contrast with Himself, not excepting the disciples that follow Him, or the greatest of woman-born, who goes before Him.

The division of the four Gospels is also in accord with the scriptural manner, where all is according to God. It is not the 2+2 which is true division, and seems always suggestive of evil in some way; it is 3+1, the number of manifestation and of supreme Godhead: together, therefore, showing us Him who is "God manifest in the flesh." The first three are, as thus going together, called "synoptic" Gospels, as uniting, with all their differences, in a common view of the Lord, very different from that of John, in which all His divine glory is at last displayed. The three agree together, and contrast with John in this, that in them, as in the parable of the vineyard which they all give, Christ is seen as God's last testimony to Israel—His Son, sent after the rejection

of all previous messengers, as His last resource. "Having therefore yet one Son, His well-beloved, He sent Him also last unto them, saying, they will reverence My Son." The whole character of the "synoptics" is affected by this. Testimony, as in the previous dispensations, is still going on. The demonstration of the "mind of the flesh" as "enmity against God" is not complete in them till the Cross. Israel is not yet set aside but is addressed by this last Divine Messenger, who, finding God's treasure hid in the field of the world, goes and sells all that He has to possess Himself of it. Man is not yet seen in them as "*dead* in sins;" and the decidedly Christian truths of new birth and eternal life are not yet brought out. With all this John's Gospel, coming after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and the setting aside publicly of Judaism by the government of God, is in direct contrast. All three of the synoptic gospels, moreover *emphasize* the Lord's humanity; John's, as already said, most clearly and emphatically proclaims His Deity.

This distinction is at once seen in the cherubic figures of the Apocalypse before referred to, and which it will be well for us now to take up for full determination of whether and how they apply to the Gospels. That the "beasts" of the fourth chapter of Revelation—which the Revised Version more properly calls the "living creatures"—are in fact cherubic forms, no question has, I suppose, been ever raised, and could hardly be by any one who has compared them with the cherubim of Ezekiel (chap. i. 5–10). There are differences, into which it is not needful to inquire here, but the essential forms are the same. In Revelation the four forms are given in order and numbered; and the order is exactly that of the Gospels to which they respectively apply: the first like a lion; the second like a calf—or young ox;* the third with the face of a man; and the fourth, like a flying eagle.

Here at once we realize a distinction between the first three and the fourth, which is the bird of heaven: this clearly answers, as the Western interpreters saw, to the Gospel of John; as the kingly lion to Matthew; the laborer ox to Mark; and the face of a man to Luke—the gospel of the Manhood. These applications will bear the most thorough scrutiny; and the cherubim themselves will be found embroidered upon the veil of the holiest, which we have divine authority for understanding to be the "flesh" of Christ. (Heb. x. 20). We can see, therefore, that the cherubim may have this relation to the Christ of the Gospels. In fact they speak of the government of God, and are thus "in the midst of the throne and round about the throne," and in the tabernacle were out of, and of one piece with, the mercy-seat. (Exod. xxv. 19.) In their different forms they convey to us the different features of divine government, features naturally derived from Him with whom the government is found; and thus again we need not wonder in them to have Christ before us.

* *Μόσχος* is so applied in the Septuagint, and in fact in Heb. ix. 12, 19.

We see, then, that the ancient view is true; even while those from whom we get it did not know how true it was, and were at a loss when they came to the application of it. It thus seems as I have said, a specimen of apostolic tradition, which tradition (as so constantly) proved itself unable to keep, but which God has restored to us. Let us now look at these living creatures in the order in which Revelation presents them to us, and compare them with the Gospels in the order in which we find them in our Bibles.

1. The Lion.—There is a passage in Proverbs (xxx. 29–31) which singularly connects together four things which seem to have the closest relationship with the Gospel of Matthew: "There be three things that are good in stepping; yea, four that are good in going: a lion which is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away from any; a war-horse; or a he-goat; and a King against whom there is no rising up." I give what is only a slight correction of the common version. The first three things spoken of here are distinguished from the fourth, as so often in Scripture, and for a reason with which we are acquainted. The writer does not say "*step* well" of the King, nor would it be so suitable; but the more hidden meaning of the first three comes to the surface in the last—the King: and the King above all characterizes Matthew. It is as this that Christ is worshiped by the magi; and it is as this that the genealogy introduces Him. Moreover, He is in the first place Son of David,—King of Israel; and here the lion symbol comes to the front, as in the very scene in Revelation in which we find the cherubic creatures, and in which He is announced as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" —the One now going to take up the cause of the Jew on earth.

This naturally introduces, again, the second symbol in Proverbs,—the war-horse.* When the Lamb opens the first seal of the book which He alone can open, we see a war-horse and its rider going forth; and in the closing visions of the 19th chapter He Himself is seen on the war-horse too. "In righteousness He doth judge and make war."

The third symbol in the passage in Proverbs seems in contrast, however, with these thoughts. "A he-goat" may be of stately carriage, but if that be all, the thought would be merely trivial. In fact, it is a word that is used which somewhat more approaches the previous thoughts: *tayish* means the "butter," or "striker;" but still there is nothing additional in this to what has gone before, and the thought is manifestly weaker than in preceding cases. What is there that can supplement it? I believe, that which the goat typically so perfectly suggests—the thought of *substitutionary sacrifice*. Israel must have the scape-goat in order to have her King. And the book of Psalms brings

* In the common and revised versions, "a grey-hound;" literally, "girt in the loins," in Gesenius (*Thesaur*) "war-horse," girt about with trappings, as seen in the sculptures of Persepolis.

again and again (see Ps. xx., xxi., cii., etc. *notes*) these things together. Matthew shows us in a parable of the Kingdom, and in the history of the King, that He who finds the treasure in the field must sell all that He hath to buy the field. Thus then all four thoughts perfectly unite and fill out the picture of the first Gospel.

The Lion as a symbol unites but the thoughts of power and royalty, and thus emphasizes what is the chief character of the book. Christ the Son of David, the Lion of Judah,—this, though far from being all that is in the book, is its central feature.

2. How any thoughtful mind could have regarded Mark as symbolized by the lion is hard to realize; and yet this, though it was not the view of Irenæus, had the most general consent among those that followed him. But the power displayed in Mark is of another order, and the ox has strength, but which is spent in service. In this way the apostle interprets it as the type of the laborer (1 Cor. ix. 10), as it is also the fullest sacrifice known under the law. And in Mark we have this Servant character of the Lord, whether in active labor or in patient offering of Himself. Hence the introductory portions which are found in Matthew and Luke are here omitted, and we come at once to His active service. Hence too His titles are in general absent from Mark, save that He is Son of God, which makes His service so full and wonderful. This character of the Gospel is plain all through, but we are going to look at it more fully presently.

3. The "face of a man" greets us very certainly in Luke. It is emphatically the Gospel of the Manhood; and the face of a man is that unto which you look naturally to learn what he is, and what is in his heart towards you. You are never nearer to Christ than in the Gospel of Luke; and while His divine glory does not shine out as in the fourth Gospel, yet you are made assuredly to know that in Him you draw near to God. It is here that we learn of the Shepherd's quest of the lost sheep, and of the Father's reception of a returning prodigal. Our hearts will at once recall sufficiently the tenderness and intimacy which are everywhere manifest in this Gospel; while every trait of complete manhood in Him is carefully delineated for us.

4. The resemblance fails most—from the necessity of the case, probably, *must* fail most in the case of John: where yet the bird of heaven can hardly be mistaken in its reference to Him who speaks of Himself in it as "the Son of man who is in heaven." We should hardly have anticipated here, no doubt, of all the birds of heaven, the "flying eagle." We must notice particularly, however, that it is just "the way of the eagle in the air" of which the writer of Proverbs once more speaks, as of one of the "things too wonderful for him" (ch. xxx. 19). It is the soaring character of truth in John that is here pointed out to us: truth that penetrates to regions quite outside of human ken. It reminds us of His own words in direct reference to this, that "no man hath ascended up

to heaven but He that came down from heaven," so that here we must be debtors to Himself alone, if He reveal to us that of which there can be no other witness except His.

But the "flying eagle" can yet suggest other thoughts,—thoughts not only of divine strength or of divine wisdom, but also of divine tenderness no less and ministering care. "Ye have seen," says the Lord to His people of old, "how I have borne you upon *eagle's wings*, and brought you to myself." (Exod. xix. 4.) And again, "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him." (Deut. xxxii. 11, 12.) Here then under this figure we may think not merely of heights that surpass our powers, and of ways too wonderful for us, but of divine love that would enable us to soar, and support our feebleness in it with divine omnipotence. And of this character truly is the fourth Gospel.

This may serve as a first introduction to these blessed books, and assure us of the reality of the provision made for our understanding them. But this is only an encouragement to enter more deeply into the work of comparison, and realize the harmonies that are in these differences, and the fullness of blessing that the Gospels have for us in leading us into the adoring contemplation and apprehension of Christ. Let us go on then into a fuller examination of them in this relation that they have to one another and to ourselves, and may the Spirit of Christ who is with us to take of the things of Christ and show them unto us, lead, control, and enlarge every faculty, and make room for Him less unworthy of Him in our hearts.

The Gospels in Their Internal Relationship to One Another.

The Gospels then are four, not one; and there is no accident or mistake in this. There is, of course, a deep inward unity which belongs to them: because truth is one; but the apprehension of this does not depend upon our ability to put them together into one perfect narrative, nor even to expunge from them as four all appearance of contradiction to one another. The Evangelists are not to be treated as if under arraignment as false witnesses, lest we find them do as He did before a human bar—open not their mouths. They have written, without any possibility of denial of it, four books the like of which the world cannot produce beside; and they have pictured for us such a Person as has never been found but once: we must credit them, then, with knowing better than any wisdom of any age could teach them, how to do the work which they have so admirably done; and we must seek to be learners only of their method, and disciples at their feet.

There are four Gospels, then, not one; and these four are three and one. This division is surely significant, for the simple reason that it

exists. In the word of God nothing exists in vain; and the more we inquire in this faith into every detail of it, apparently the most trifling, the more we shall be rewarded. We have then in these four Gospels, first, a trinity of Gospels,—a three that in some sense—some sense of value to us—are one: the Synoptics. The last Gospel stands by itself as a second division.

1. *The Synoptic Gospels.*

We have already glanced at the unity of the "synoptic" Gospels,—the name generally given to them since Griesbach employed it: but long before seen in some measure, though in a different way from that in which we have considered them. Ordinarily it is apprehended more as arising from there being in them essentially a common narrative, which has been sought to be accounted for, either by their all being fashioned out of some still more primitive, and perhaps unwritten Gospel, or by their growing out of one another by abridgement or addition.

Now this, to which so much importance is attached, is in fact of the very smallest importance to us. It belongs, with all these theories of the "how" of origin, to the region of speculation merely, which as such gives no firm ground to build upon; and then, if it were as certain all of it, as it is all uncertain, it would still remain that we have the three Gospels and not one, and with all needful assurance of divine intention as to their being three.

The similarity of the three Gospels is, however, not to be mistaken. They give us largely the same incidents, often in quite similar language, sometimes in the same words. With all this, characteristic differences of style are plainly to be detected, and differences otherwise, which only force themselves the more on our attention, as being divergences from what might seem a common narrative. Since God has given them to us as three, not one, it is plain that the differences are the very things which will guide us to the meaning of this; and oftentimes the worst difficulties for unbelief will be fullest of meaning to believing inquiry.

After all, *this* unity of the three Gospels seems to yield little or nothing as to the division of the Gospels by their subject-matter, and we shall be compelled to look elsewhere to find a meaning.

Even what has been previously said as to their common character does not characterize the presentation of the Lord Himself in them, and correspondingly seems to have nothing to say as to numerical structure. That which must characterize a division of the Gospels can only be something inherent in the life of the Lord Himself, and a broad feature of it too, and in looking for this, light will soon break in upon us.

The Gospels are essentially a glorious Life lived in the world—a "Life" which was the "Light of men." If it is John's Gospel that gives us the doctrine, the reality of it cannot be confined to this: *every* Gospel is a witness of it. Nor in speaking of them as a life displayed,

is it meant at all to separate it in this character from that marvellous Death, which however in so many ways contrasted with this, was (in the way in which we are speaking of it now) nothing but the fruitage of that Life itself, and without which it could have profited us nothing.

But this Life—which was in character always "that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us" (1 Jno. i. 2) —necessarily displayed itself in two essential characters, which together answers to the twofold revelation of God which has been given us as Light and Love. (1 Jno. i. 5; iv. 8, 16). Now Love is the full divine energy; Light is the necessary character of its display. The apostle can say as to believers (Eph. v. 8), "now are ye light in the Lord;" but he does not and could not say, "now are ye *love* in the Lord." "Love," therefore, finds a pre-eminent place in the Gospel of John, which is, as we know, the home of it, and thus the Gospel of the Deity of Christ.

Are then the Synoptic Gospels, which we may certainly call in this emphatic way the Gospels of His humanity, those which more occupy themselves with "light," as the complemental revelation of God? This, at first sight, seems hard to realize: for "light," too, is undoubtedly a word that is characteristic of John, and love cannot be revealed without it. "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ;" and these are love and light in application to the need of man, and cannot be separated from one another.

Light is here also as always, the revealing power: "that which doth make manifest is light." (Eph. v. 13). But the "fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth" (ver. 9); and the apostle, when showing how eternal life, or the divine nature, is exhibited in those that are born of God, makes its display to be in *righteousness* and love: "whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother" (1 Jno. iii. 10).

Righteousness, as consistency with relationship, may be even used, and *is* used in Scripture, in a broader sense than this: so that the "righteous" may be the full expression for the people of God; and the "righteousness of the law" cover the thought of love itself. (Rom. xiii. 8, 10). But we could not speak of God's righteousness in this way. Thus righteousness cleaves more to the human, as love to the divine order: though God who is love is righteous; and the man who is righteous loves.

Thus we can understand how the first division of the Gospels, emphasizing the humanity of the Lord Jesus, is characterized by righteousness, which as consistency with relationship finds threefold expression in the three synoptics: in Matthew in the King; in Mark the ministering Servant of man's need; in Luke, the Man, who as Priest with God opens the sanctuary for us. Here the first division finds numerical significance in Him whose righteousness was one harmonious whole, full-rounded and complete; the unique Man, Christ Jesus.

We must now look more closely at the separate Gospels.

(1) *Matthew.*

It was an old idea that our present Matthew was either a translation, or at least derived from a "Gospel according to the Hebrews." This is now discredited, and it would at any rate, if proved, be of no possible use to us. But it derives all the semblance of truth it ever had from the very obvious connection with the Old Testament in this first of the Gospels; which approves also its place among them as the first. Not only are the quotations from the Old Testament comparatively more numerous than in the other; but these, where made by the evangelist himself, are fresh translations from the Hebrew original, while, where in the mouths of others, they are from that ordinarily in use, the Greek Septuagint. His own style is full of Hebraisms, and he anticipates with those for whom he writes a knowledge of Jewish customs and of the law, such as only Jews might be expected to possess.

But apart from all this, his primary theme is the connection of the Lord with Israel's Messianic hopes and promises; and though on that very account he has to show also how "He came to His own and His own received Him not," and how consequently the "kingdom of heaven would be taken from them," and assume the mystery-form in which it was unknown to the prophets of Israel, yet still we are not left in uncertainty as to the final issue, when at the coming of the Son of man from heaven, the "elect" nation will be gathered from the four winds to their ancient land again. (xxiv. 30, 31.) This connection with Daniel and the prophets is indeed little more than indicated. The destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of her people are an immediate prospect, and with this the Gentile Christianity, for us now nearing its predicted end. Matthew is the first book of the New Testament, and the field of view widens accordingly.

Matthew is in this way the dispensational Gospel, and even the Church is contemplated in it (xvi. 18). Thus there is a new expansion of the ancient promise, and that Christ is the Seed of Abraham gains a new significance: we shall see how in the genealogy with which the book opens this is already indicated.

But King and kingdom are the governing thoughts in Matthew throughout, and the characteristic phrase, "the kingdom of heaven" is found in it two and thirty times. This is divine rule, though it may be intrusted to human hands, and is: for Christ is the King of it. In His absence as rejected by His own, and administered by men on earth, it assumes forms foreign to His mind, and must itself be purged when He comes again. This implies present discipline for His own, and final judgment for the earth; and these, which are the fruits of His own rejection, pervade the book with a certain shadow, and an unmistakable feeling of distance. There is indeed a Father in heaven, and without whom not a sparrow falls to the ground; but there is not nearness of intimacy. The work of salvation is intimated as to be accomplished,

but there is not as yet the joy of it. Forgiveness of sins is found, as in the Lord's parable of the kingdom (xviii. 23–35), not absolute but conditional and revocable. Discipleship and its responsibility in walk and life are emphasized; but man's heart is not yet awakened in response to the outflow of the heart of God as yet it will be. Over all these is a certain restraint and reserve, which in the other Gospels we find more and more lifted, until we reach in John what can be called in the full sense communion with the Father and with the Son.

All this suits and illustrates a character of things which we call governmental, and which Moses on the mount at the second giving of the law very precisely pictures to us, but which may go and does go on, apart from any legal covenant whatever. When we have known God as now fully revealed in grace in the Person of His Son, and are with Him also upon that footing, that does not prevent His governmental ways being, as always, largely encompassed with the mystery that attaches itself necessarily to the throne of the Majesty on high. Providentially, as we term it, "clouds and darkness are round about Him" still; nor in His dealings with us do we meet Him face to face; but rather (safely covered with His hand as Moses was, and hid in the cleft of the Rock) we realize His glory passing by; then we look after Him and behold the glory that has passed by—as the apostle distinguishes between the present affliction, which is "not joyous but grievous," but which "*afterwards* yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those that are *exercised* thereby" (Heb. xii. 11). It is this exercise which the very mystery of His ways secures to us, while it draws out faith in us and reminds us of our feebleness and ignorance and of the holiness of Him with whom we have to do.

That we know Him in Christ, and know Him to be for us, is another thing, in no wise in contradiction with this, and which it is the part of faith never to account of as if it were contradiction. For us it is a Father's hand which is over us: "we call on Him as Father who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work," (1 Pet. i. 17); so that the revelation of the Father which we find in Matthew, the necessary effect of God's speaking to us "in the Son" (Heb. i. 2), does not interfere with this, but only gives it Christian instead of legal character. The New Testament stamp is upon Matthew throughout; but we are in it only upon the threshold of the New Testament. Naturally therefore, it is just in Matthew that we find "branches that run over the wall" for Israel also, and a link maintained with the remnant of a future day, when His ancient people in the day of famine shall turn to seek their rejected Joseph, so long unknown.

We see, then, that the thought of the Kingdom and the King is the controlling one in Matthew. At first sight we may not so readily see how the truth of atonement connects itself with these. Yet the Cross in Matthew is not simply the sign of the rejection of the King, but as in

the other Gospels it is distinctly atoning. The cry of desertion, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani," expresses this in the fullest way. This was not man's forsaking at all, nor his persecution: it was the judgment of God upon sin, and the endurance of this was that which was the very essence of atonement.

But, as I have said, we do not readily connect this with the thought of the King. Sacrifice was exclusively priestly work; and the Priest is found rather in Luke than Matthew. Yet in the Old Testament, apart from ritual law, the King is no less distinctly the Redeemer. In that verse in Proverbs which we have already seen to associate together in so striking a way the different characters of Matthew, the "goat" is the very symbol of substitutionary sacrifice. The King is the natural representative of his people: the divine King still more so: and the 20th and 102nd psalms, though with different degrees of clearness, alike connect His Kingship with His sacrificial sufferings (see *notes* on the Psalms). Even by the hands of His enemies, it is as the King of the Jews that the Lord is put upon the cross, and it is in parables of the kingdom which are peculiar to Matthew that, twice over, the unique figure is presented of One who to acquire the object upon which his heart is set, goes and sells all that he has, to purchase it (chap. xiii. 44–46).

The symbolism here is quite in accordance with Matthew elsewhere. In the prayer taught to the disciples, we find in Matthew "debts," where in Luke we have "sins;" and this again agrees entirely with that view of the work of sacrifice which the Cross presents in Matthew—the governmental aspect of the trespass-offering. But this we must consider with more attention.

As the Gospels give us a fourfold view of the Person of the Lord, so they do also of His sacrificial work; and this is precisely the fourfold view of the opening chapters of Leviticus. Omitting the meat (or meal-) offering, which is not sacrificial, we have there four offerings in which life is taken and the blood of atonement offered to God,—offerings which are really sacrifices—the "burnt," "peace," "sin" and "trespass-offerings."

These are divided into two classes: the burnt and peace offerings are of "sweet savor." The peace-offering speaks of peace with God accomplished and communion attained; the burnt-offering, which all goes up as sweet savor, of the perfection of the work which accomplishes this,—of obedience found in absolute devotedness to the will of God. These we shall have in Luke and John respectively; and of their application to these we shall have to speak by and by. In the two other offerings, the sin and trespass, the judgment of sin is the side dwelt upon, the necessary result of divine holiness, but which cannot be (as judgment) a sweet savor to God. Between these, again, there is this difference: that in the sin-offering sin is dealt with fully as that; in the trespass-offering, whether as regards God or man, it is treated rather as *injury*, the

exact amount of which is estimated by the priest as having the mind of God, and made up with overpayment. In the sin-offering the thought is of *expiation* in the full sense; in the trespass-offering of *reparation*.

The Gospels of Matthew and Mark undoubtedly give the aspect of the offering which is not sweet savor. This is evident by that cry of forsaken sorrow which the Lord utters on the cross in both these Gospels, but in these only. But there is a difficulty connected with this very fact: for the sin-offering alone (as given in Leviticus) shows the full judgment of sin in that outside place in which—away from all that is owned as in relationship to God—the victim is burnt upon the ground without an altar: but *both* Gospels show our blessed Lord in this outside place: the cry of abandonment is in one as much as the other. What then is the difference between them? or is there in this respect a difference?

Now, in fact, in the cry itself there *is* a difference, and for which there must be a reason: it is "Eli" in Matthew, "Eloi" in Mark; and though both are names of God, there is a difference of meaning. "Eloi" is the ordinary expression for "my God;" while "Eli" speaks rather of *power* —"my Mighty One." And this last is found, just where such a difference is most intelligible, in the "lion" Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of the Kingdom and the Throne. "Eloi," as in the Gospel of Mark, would evidently suit better the thought of the sin-offering, as what is in view of the *holiness* of God, or His *nature*. And if so, Mark will give the sin-offering aspect, and Matthew that of the trespass-offering.

But to this, which is in fact the true view, an objection may be made, which at first sight would seem a fatal one. In the 22nd psalm, from which the words are taken, and which without doubt gives the sin-offering aspect (*see notes on the Psalms*), "Eli" and *not* "Eloi" is the word we find. How then can this be the true view?

I think, nevertheless, that this is not decisive. Scripture is not written in one stereotyped language, however accurate; and in its flexibility of speech it knows how to preserve the most perfect accuracy, while gaining by it a fuller meaning than such rigidity would allow. Any one who will turn to the 22nd psalm will find that the agonizing question, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" is not only asked but answered there. It is because "*God is holy*, and dwelling amid the praises of Israel." If a holy God is to be able to dwell amid the praises of a sinful people, it can only be through such atonement as the cry expresses. Thus the question, why is the Mighty One forsaking the blessed Sufferer, is answered by the declaration of His holiness and grace. Here, plainly, "Eli," "my Mighty One," is more suited to the psalm, because the *answer* it is that contains the thought, which in Mark, *where there is no answer*, is suggested in the question itself. Thus there need be no contradiction between the language of the psalm and what has been suggested as to that of the Gospels.

That Matthew's is the trespass-offering aspect of the Cross may be seen in a still clearer way if it is considered that the trespass-offering is, as has already been said, the *governmental* offering. Reparation, restitution, and in legal phrase the giving damages, are plainly governmental requirements; but the sin-offering, as shown in the forsaking of God, is a question of His *nature*. God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look on sin: hence the horror of that cry from Him whose delight God ever was: though, as we have seen, the full expression of this is scarcely given in Matthew. While yet the trespass-offering can put on, as here, something of the sin-offering character, because the claim of divine government requires yet a witness to the holiness of the divine nature.

In Matthew we find also the *double* answer of God to the work of Christ. Having gone for us into the darkness which that which fell upon the Cross only symbolized, the darkness is for us dispelled: God dwells no more in it. The veil of the temple is rent in twain from the top to the bottom: the glory of God can shine out; the way in to God is opened for man.

But the Lord gives up His spirit also: the double portion of man is death and judgment. Judgment He takes first, and having exhausted this, dies. The answer to His death is seen in the resurrection of many of those who slept, who after His resurrection go into the holy city and appear to many. Now death is the stamp of divine *government* upon a fallen creature, a thing not in itself necessary, for in order to the proper judgment resurrection must come in. And while Matthew and Mark alike give the rending of the veil, Matthew alone gives the resurrection of the saints. All is perfectly—*divinely* fitting.

Again, in Mark there is no prophetic Aceldama, the field of blood bought for themselves by the people with the money of Christ's betrayal; the cry, "His blood be on us and our children" is omitted; there is no judgment even of the traitor. In Matthew as the governmental Gospel, these things have their right and necessary place, and their omission would be as much a defect in Matthew, as it is a perfection in Mark.

Before we close the brief review of this Gospel, let us notice that, as it begins with the genealogy which is the King's human and legal title, so it shows that He has another and higher one, inasmuch as the kingdom He rules is greater far than David's whose Son is no less his Lord. Matthew thus connects with John by the emphasis that it puts on the Divine Sonship, and on Jesus being truly Immanuel—"God with us." At the close we find accordingly all authority given to Him, in heaven as on earth. All through, the theme is one, although the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" is seen also, as in the prophet's vision, as the "Lamb slain."

(2) *Mark.*

We have already partly anticipated the subject of Mark's Gospel. Mark is the cherubic "ox"—the Laborer: Christ as the Servant of man's need and of the divine goodness; in this way in entire contrast with Matthew, of which in some respects it might seem, as it has been declared by some to be, an abridgment. He is at the very outset declared to be the "Son of God," but this to give blessed character to that ministry of His which it is the purpose of the writer to describe. The "kingdom of God" we have naturally often still, but no more, as in Matthew, that of "Christ" or "of the Son of man." Save as accusation on the Cross, He is never explicitly the "King of the Jews." Even when He rides into Jerusalem it is only the "kingdom of our father David" that is announced. His title of "Lord" is very seldom taken. But He is the Son of God in service, with divine power and riches in His hand, servant in love which requires nothing but power to entitle it to serve. On this account no genealogy is given or needed.

The earnestness of His service is marked by the frequency of the word "immediately" occurring in connection with it. Half of all the occurrences in the New Testament (40 out of 80) are found in Mark,* but these, of course, in various connections, the enemies of His Person and work being busy also. The singleness of His service is seen in that characteristic word of His (xiii. 32) which must be read in the light of John xv. 15, to be understood aright. Even the Son as Servant knows nothing of His Father's business, save that which is given Him to communicate. Again what tenderness is seen in all the details of His service as Mark dwells upon them: how His heart, His lips, His hands, moved sympathetically in the relief of all manner of human need. Here, too, as in Luke, the ascension is given as the fitting close to His path of humiliation, and this is marked as to the place of power, "the right hand of God": which does not change the unwearied Worker, but puts as it were afresh into His hand the power to serve: for immediately we read: "And they went forth and preached everywhere, *the Lord working with them*, and confirming the word with signs following."

We need not wonder if, in connection with this we find hints of another, if not a larger audience being addressed than in Matthew's Hebraistic gospel. Mark's on the contrary, as it abounds in Latinisms, has been even affirmed (though without ground) to have been written in Latin; yet scholars pronounce it "still much more akin to the Hebraistic diction of St. Matthew than to the purer style of St. Luke." (*Thomson, in Smith's Dictionary*). Yet the contrast with Matthew is decided: he never himself appeals to the Old Testament; he never names the Law; he describes Jewish customs as if writing to strangers; terms

* In the common version variously translated as "forthwith, straightway, anon," twice "as soon as," and once "shortly."

that would be offensive to the Gentiles are omitted, and the grace to them more dwelt upon. Even the temple they are reminded was to be called "a house of prayer for all nations;" and in the closing commission, the disciples are bidden, "Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," even "the Jew first" being entirely omitted.

Yet in Mark, as in Matthew, at least until the close is reached, there is not found the nearness to God which is so manifest in Luke. The Father is mentioned as such but five times, and "your Father" only in one place (xi. 25, 26). It is the servants', not the children's place that is here contemplated, even though it is recognized that the servants are yet children. Governmental responsibilities and rewards are emphasized, as in Matthew; but there as of disciples, here of laborers for the accomplishment of divine purposes, and after the pattern of Him who as "Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

But in this last, as has been seen also in Matthew, we find the shadow which hangs over the book. The sin-offering aspect of the Lord's work, as shown here, is only indeed brought out in the closing chapters. The substitutionary character attaches, not to His life-work but to the Cross alone. As to this we cannot be too clear. Yet the shadow hangs over the whole in this sense that until atonement has been seen as made, the fruits of it cannot be properly enjoyed. The shadow lengthens into a terrible night, which with a sudden break is scattered and the day comes; for those brought into it, never to give place again.

(3) *Luke.*

In Luke's picture of the Lord we have indeed "the face of a man." Luke's is the Gospel of the Manhood. Thus we have His birth as in Matthew, but with more circumstantial detail than in Matthew; and instead of the King, hailed by the worship of the magi, we have the gospel preached to the poor, and from the opened heavens by the joyful lips of angels, who proclaim God's good pleasure to be in men. The presence of Christ on earth is at once the assurance and the justification of this: and the manger at Bethlehem shows how fully He has assumed manhood in its lowliest and neediest conditions. We see Him in childhood, growing in wisdom as in stature; and after thirty years of the fulfilment of His own personal responsibility, taking at last His place of priestly service openly before God and man at His baptism by John. There the Father's voice attests His satisfaction, and the descent of the Spirit endows Him for His work.

It is here, and not at His birth as in Matthew, that His genealogy is given; but the stream as it were runs backward now. The line is traced to Adam and not merely to Abraham, and we do not need to know that as a Man He is descended from Adam. But we are reminded too that *he* was by creation a son of God, and now have the full significance

of this made good in a Second Man who undoes the fall and brings in unimagined blessing. "The Second Man is of heaven." (1 Cor. xv. 47, *R.V.*)

This shows already the character of the Gospel as that in which God and man are at last at one. A new word, "salvation," is now upon men's lips and in their heart: *present* salvation, known and rejoiced in; peace and forgiveness fully assured. Even from the beginning of it the voice of praise breaks out; and it ends with the triumphant worship of those who have seen the risen Saviour ascend to heaven with His hands out-spread in blessing. Between these the grace of God unfolds itself without check or hindrance, in word and deed; not simply in goodness ministering to the daily needs and sorrows which appeal to all, but in awakening the consciousness of sin, in bowing the soul in repentance, in bringing to God and assuring men of welcome to Him, while the kiss, the ring, the robe, the music of the Father's house await the prodigal, and begin for him the new life which is eternal.

In all this Luke's is the peace-offering Gospel, in which the fruits of atonement are emphasized, rather than the work itself; and this, when we look at the Cross, is quite apparent. The anguish is in the garden rather than at the Cross. There, though the darkness is spoken of, the interpreting words of the Lord Jesus are not found; while twice He cries to God as Father,—in the first case, praying for His murderers. He is not Himself in the darkness, but in the light with God; and it is here we find Him giving sweetest assurance to the soul of the poor sinner by His side, and the door of paradise opened without question to a dying thief.

This is, all through, the manner of the Gospel; and it is in perfect accord with the grace of that humanity, which is here dwelt upon in all that characterizes it. He is the "brother born for adversity," "the Mediator, the Man Christ Jesus," the compassionate High Priest, who goes up to heaven with the uplifted hands. Luke therefore is the writer of the Acts also, which shows the fruit of His intercession in the place to which He is gone up. That Luke was also a Gentile (comp. Col. iv. 11, 14), the only one among the writers of the New Testament, and writes in both cases to a Gentile, is surely significant.

2. *John.*

We now come to the second division of the Gospels, in which, as we have seen, John stands alone. The number of the division is that which pre-eminently speaks of Christ. It suggests at once the *Second* Person of the Godhead, the divine Son in full reality, the *Only*-Begotten and not the First-born. Not less does it suggest His two natures, the Godhead and the Manhood, which John brings fully out. The activity or descent of divine love among us might well be implied under this number.

It is peculiarly also the New Testament Gospel, the grace and truth which have come by Jesus Christ being not merely exhibited as beyond law, but in contrast with it (i. 17). We are so outside Judaism, that its most familiar institutions (as the passover, ch. vi. 4) have to be explained to us; while the Hebrew names and titles (even Messias, ch. i. 41) are given only to be translated into the language of the Gentiles. This connects with its position as the final Gospel, starting morally where the others close, with the Lord's rejection by Israel (the theme of Matthew, ch. i. 11) and non-recognition by the world (10), and thus showing the necessity of divine work—of new life needed by the soul, which when received brings into the relationship of children with God and capacity to receive the divine revelation.

For there is now no veil over the face of God: man tested not only by law but in the Person of Christ in perfect lowly grace, come only to be rejected, God must now act for Himself, and in a way fully worthy of Himself. The veil therefore which law had kept over the face of God, and which in the other Gospels, even in Luke, is rent only at the Cross (Matt. xxvii. 51, Mark xv. 38, Luke xxiii. 45), is absent here all through: "We *beheld* His glory," says the apostle, with direct contrastive reference to the tabernacle of old,* "glory as of the Only-Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

A contrast on the opposite side with the Synoptic Gospels makes this more impressive. All three give in detail—Luke in the fullest manner —the account of the transfiguration, the exceptional display of the glory of the "Son of *Man*, coming in His Kingdom." (Matt. xvi. 28; Mark ix. 1; Luke ix. 27: comp. 2 Pet. i. 16–18.) John omits this altogether, and necessarily, for the divine glory of Christ is ever before his eyes. This omission is similar to that of the ascension, which is indeed referred to, but in an exceptional chapter (vi. 62) in which He is seen as Son of man: "What and if ye see the Son of man ascend up where He was before?" The account of it is given in the two Gospels which speak of Him respectively as Servant and as Man; there crowning His path of humiliation with divine acknowledgment. But here it is on this account omitted. The Word has become flesh; and the blessedness of this is to remain with us, without anything to render it less near. "Grace and truth" have come to abide.

There is one special character of John's Gospel, already in part referred to, by which it is connected with the preceding ones, and which will not allow us to forget that after all it is a *fourth:* that is the word "world": it is the universal aspect of the grace that is come. It is that which manifests the true Light, that "it lights"—or "shines for"—"every man." When the sun rises, it makes no distinction of persons:

* "The Word became flesh, and *tabernacled* among us: and we beheld His glory" (ch. i. 14, *Greek*).

when God is revealed, we can ask with the apostle: "Is He the God of the Jews only? is He not also of the Gentiles?" (Rom. iii. 29). So we read here: "I am the Light of the world;" "God so loved the world;" "sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved;" "my flesh which I will give for the life of the world," and so on. What makes all this more marked is that, as often observed, John's Gospel is that which gives us *characteristically* the Lord's Jerusalem ministry, while those before it show us rather that in Galilee. But if He is here at the centre of Jewish worship and ritual, it is only to display the hollowness of it all, and Himself as the one resource and refuge of the soul. This needs no special exemplification: we shall find it all through the book.

It is that also to which the preceding Gospels have been leading on. Even in Matthew Israel is seen rejecting Him, and the Kingdom of heaven thus acquires its mystery-form. The Sower goes forth to sow His seed in the broad field of the world; but this is more anticipative of what is to be. In Mark we find what has been called the Latin Gospel and signs of a Gentile audience being contemplated. Luke is a Gentile distinctly addressing a Gentile. But in John, though salvation may come of the Jews, yet man as man, the world as the world, is fully set forth,—in its guilt and misery alike everywhere, but thus all distinctions lost in this common ruin; amid which divine grace finds everywhere its objects and ministers to the same need.

Man must be born again: this is now for the first time explicitly declared. "I give unto them eternal life": here is the grace suited. But it rises beyond the mere supply of need in bringing those that are thus "made partakers of the divine nature" into the blessed place of relationship with God as Father, in the full enjoyment of communion with the Father and the Son.

All this can now be merely indicated: it can only be developed when we come, if the Lord will, to the study of the book itself. There is, however, one character beside which has to be considered, and that is the aspect which is here presented of the Lord's sacrificial work. Even here, where least we expect to find it, His glory is shining forth. His own words about it are: "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him" (chap. xiii. 31). We find at the Cross no horror of great darkness hanging about it here. There is no cry of desertion. There is no agony portrayed. If He says, "I thirst," it is not that His thirst may be met, but "that Scripture may be fulfilled." The character of the burnt-offering, which the fortieth psalm expresses, is here made manifest: "Sacrifice and offering Thou hadst no delight in: ears hast Thou digged for *Me;* burnt-offering and sin-offering Thou hast not demanded. Then said I, Lo, I am come: in the roll of the book it is written of ME: I delight to do Thy pleasure, my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart." (See notes on the Psalms.)

The many sacrifices of Judaism are here displaced by the one perfect Sacrifice, which in its entire devotedness to God shows the true burnt-offering character, its savor brought out by the fire of divine holiness. So in John Jesus offers Himself in the calm and perfect consciousness of acceptance: "when He had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished; and He bowed His head and rendered up His spirit."

This is the witness, not merely of the strength of our salvation, but to the perfectness of our acceptance in the Beloved. How suited also to that particular aspect of truth which we have here: viz. communion in the light with God, maintained by the preciousness of that obedience in which we are accepted. The perfection of the work which He has declared is presently borne witness to by the blood and water which follow the thrust of the soldier's spear. It is the answer of divine love to man's senseless enmity,—the divine provision for his need. The blood of atonement is here found with the cleansing water,—guilt and impurity are both met in the Cross: that which puts away sin for men before God, reconciles them also *to* God: "the life which I live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20).

This must suffice as to the Gospels before we take them up in detail, as now at once we shall begin to do. The orderly display of these and other features can only be seen in this way. May the Lord give us happy and fruitful meditation.

SCOPE AND DIVISIONS OF MATTHEW.

CHRIST, the King, and His Kingdom: which, offered to Israel, and rejected by them, is seen prophetically to take on its present "mystery" form, and pass over to the Gentiles. This, too, is seen in its whole course as committed to the hands of men in the absence of the King, and lapsing more and more into disorder, until His coming as the Son of man ends it in judgment. The principles characterizing it throughout are given; and the events connected with His coming again. Finally we have His life given up as the Trespass-offering, in which He sells all that He has to possess Himself, whether of the Church or Israel, and, rising from the dead, all power in heaven and in earth is given into His hand.

Matthew has seven divisions:—

1. (Chap. i., ii.) The King, as promised.
2. (Chap. iii.–vii.) The Announcement of the Kingdom and the King.
3. (Chap. viii–xii.) The manifestation of the King, which manifests also the people's heart towards Him.
4. (Chap. xiii.–xx. 28.) The Kingdom in the hands of men.
5. (Chap. xx., 29–xxiii.) The Governmental Presentation, and the End as to Israel.
6. (Chap. xxiv, xxv.) The putting down of evil at the consummation of the age.
7. (Chap. xxvi–xxviii): The completed purchase.

NOTES.

MATTHEW, the tax-gatherer of his own people under Roman despotism, is the one called of God to write the story of the true King, the "gift of Jehovah" to His people, and thus to fulfil the significance of his name. Rejecting the gift, Israel may indeed remain under the tax-gatherer for their sins, but the gift itself will not on that account lose its blessedness or be recalled by the "Eternal" from whom it comes, and with whom there is no repentance,—"no shadow of turning." The King shall yet reign in righteousness, and Israel too be His people, and Matthew himself shows us this; while in the meantime His grace shall not lack expression, nor His kingdom be taken from the earth.

The special designation of it, which is peculiar to Matthew is—

"THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN"

or "of the heavens," as following the Hebrew, the expression always is. In this form it is founded upon the book of Daniel, and was in common use among the Jews of our Lord's day. "According to the Rabbinic views of the time," says Edersheim, "the terms 'Kingdom,' 'Kingdom of heaven,' and 'Kingdom of God' (in the Targum on Mic. iv. 7, 'Kingdom of Jehovah')were equivalent. In fact, the word 'heaven' was very often used instead of 'God,' so as to avoid unduly familiarizing the ear with the Sacred Name. This probably accounts for the exclusive use of the expression, 'Kingdom of Heaven,' in the Gospel by St. Matthew. And the term did imply a contrast to earth, as the expression 'the Kingdom of God' did to this world. The consciousness of its contrast to earth or the world was distinctly expressed in Rabbinic writings."*

This will hardly suffice, however, as to the Gospel of Matthew, in which the constant use of this term must be sought beyond mere Rabbinism or Jewish usage. The Old Testament furnishes us also with its roots, rather than with the exact expression; but the place in which we find them is significant from its connection with a significant period in Israel's history.

In the book of Daniel we are in the "times of the Gentiles," and his prophecies have all reference to these, which he traces to their end in the coming of the Son of man (vii. 13.) But these "times of the Gentiles" imply the subjection of Jerusalem to them,—the throne of God in Israel given up, therefore. Ezekiel has in fact already shown us this, the glory of the Lord removing from Jerusalem, as necessitated by the idolatrous abominations practised there (ch. x. 18, 19, xi. 22, 23). The destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar is the sequel of this, and the carrying away of the mass of the people captive to Babylon. A significant phrase comes into constant use at this time; when the ark took its place in Jordan to lead them into the land, it was said to them: "Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the *earth* passeth over before you" (Josh. iii. 11); now in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel, and the last chapter of Chronicles, God, having left the throne of His kingdom in Israel, is become in the lips of His people as afar off—"the God of heaven."

It is as this that He gives Nebuchadnezzar the throne of earth (Dan. ii. 37, 38), alas, only to find him rebellious to the Hand that has set him on it. In consequence of which we find him sentenced shortly to be driven to the beasts

* "Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah." (i. 266).

"till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." This is paraphrased in the next verse by an expression which seems to imply the very thing of which Matthew so often speaks:—"after that thou shalt have known that the *heavens do rule*" (iv. 25, 26).

That surely seems to give us the root-idea of the "Kingdom of heaven," while yet it is as plain that nearly six centuries after this, John the Baptist was only announcing in the wilderness of Judea the Kingdom to be "at hand." The "rule" spoken of to Nebuchadnezzar is only the providential one which has always existed over all the earth and through all dispensations, but without other avouchment of it upon earth than in its acts, and these often unrecognized as such by men, and indeed an enigma to men of faith; for here "clouds and darkness are round about" God still, if "justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne." In the New Testament, on the other hand, the kingdom is in the open sight of men at least, though unbelief may still mock at it and deny it. This is only the form it assumes before it is set up in power as the prophets from of old prophesied of it, though not under the name in Matthew. These two forms are distinguished in the New Testament as "the Kingdom and *patience* of our Lord Jesus Christ" and "the Kingdom and *glory*" (Rev. i. 9; 1 Thess. ii. 12). The former is the kingdom of a *rejected* King, as such gone in the meantime from the earth, and committing authority to men who act for Him in His absence; but this leaves room for failure to come in consequence of their unfaithfulness, and a perverted form of the kingdom itself, which is carefully forewarned of, but awaits rectification at the coming of the King (Matt. xiii.) The *parables* of the Kingdom are its "mysteries" (ver. 35), hidden from the prophets of old, and which now being told out make the scribe who is now instructed in the kingdom of heaven, like one who "brings out of his treasures things *new* as well as old" (ver. 52).

The Old Testament form is a manifest Kingdom, set up in power, in the hands of Messiah, Son of David, but Immanuel. (Isa. ix. 6; xi., xii.) Judgment introduced this kingdom, which is characterized by power exercised in righteousness and mercy. Peace prevails on earth, which shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Israel regathered and restored, after disciplinary judgment has done its necessary work, becomes the centre of blessing and refreshment for the earth, the glory of the Lord being once more, but beyond all past manifestation, revealed in Zion, and His throne established there. (Isa, ii. 1–4; iv. 2–6; Zech. xiv., etc.)

In both these forms it is spoken of in Matthew as the Kingdom of heaven; in the first having no display of power on earth, the sentence of Lo-ammi pronounced on Israel at the Babylonish captivity being confirmed by their rejection of Messiah when He came. Christ, gone up on high, sits upon the Father's throne instead of on His own (Rev. iii. 21). Faith in the unseen is thus the very principle of the kingdom now, as by and by everything will be manifest to sight, heaven and earth being openly united (Jno. i. 51), the heavenly city in sight (Rev. xxi. 10, 26), and the very judgment of the rebellious shown in that which is used in the New Testament to describe hell itself (comp. Isa. lxvi. 24; Mark ix. 43–48). But thus it will still be the Kingdom of heaven (Matt. viii. 11, 12),—even manifestly so.

"Heaven" is here in antithesis to earth, as in the "Kingdom of God" God is to man. There is no other difference: some of the parables of the Kingdom of heaven in Matthew being found in the other synoptic Gospels as parables of the Kingdom of God. (Comp. Matt. xiii. 1–9, with Luke viii. 5–10; Matt. xiii. 31, 32 with Mark iv. 30–32, and Luke xiii. 18, 19; Matt. xiii. 33 with Luke xiii. 20, 21.) The term in Matthew is broader and dispensationally applied, while the Kingdom of God implies more its spiritual features (Rom. xiv. 17; Matt. vi. 33). The term "Kingdom of heaven" occurs 32 times in the Gospel, the "Kingdom of God" only 5 times: the dispensational aspect of the Kingdom characterizes the book.

Division 1.

Naturally, therefore, we begin with the coming of the King Himself, carefully shown in connection with His genealogical title, and the prophecies that announced His higher glory. But these had also foretold His rejection by His people, which begins accordingly at once to be accomplished. The magi from the east bring Him the homage of the Gentiles, but only "trouble" Jerusalem with their loyalty to its King, and the new-born Christ is sought by Herod to be put to death. But this only carries Him to Egypt, where as the Representative of His people He begins anew their history under the eye of God.

He is thus called out of it by God to fulfil His predestined course as the Branch of David, *netzer*, the slip or scion of the fallen house, which, growing up in an obscurity which is once more the presage of rejection, finds its suited place in Netzareth (Nazareth),—small enough to be despised of men, and yet in it all the hope, not merely of David or of Israel, but of the human race. Thus on both sides had the prophets prophesied of Him.

Subd. 1.

In the first subdivision we have the King identified: in the first place by His legal descent; in the second by His supernatural birth. As the King of Israel He needed the one; as the King of the Kingdom of heaven He needed the other. But the King is also in Scripture the representative-head of his people before God, and here is One whose representation of them will be surely of divine significance: it means much for Himself—it means everything for them; thus His name is called Jesus, because He shall save His people from their sins.

Sec. 1.

The Lord is introduced in a double character,—as Son of David, and as Son of Abraham. As Son of David He is King of Israel; as Son of Abraham He is not necessarily King at all; but He has a promise of widest blessing, which is on the principle of faith to all the families of the earth. It is not hindered, therefore, by Israel's rejection of Him and the consequent delay of the Davidic Kingdom: this only affects the expression of it, not the fact; which may even find a higher expression, as it has actually found one in Christianity.

Abraham is the depositary of blessing, and therefore with Abraham the genealogy begins. Since title is conveyed by the descent, the stream runs down through the centuries. We find in Luke a very different meaning conveyed by a reverse order: *the stream runs back*. The style and manner of Scripture have importance as well as its statements, and we may miss the *matter* by not attending to the *manner*.

The genealogy is divided for us into three parts, which are specially emphasized as consisting of fourteen generations each. The fact that some links in the genealogic chain have to be omitted, in order that there may be just this number, still further shows that there must be importance in it. The number must be itself significant, and probably that of the parts as well as of the generations contained in each.

In fact, the first part of the genealogy embraces both the heads of promise—both Abraham and David. The second begins at once with one in whom departure from God manifested itself, one whose heart went after other gods than the One Only God, whose special favor had been shown him. After which there is a general history of decline, three descendants of the apostate murderess, Athaliah, being blotted out of the list altogether; while the Babylonish captivity, which was the giving up of the nation as the openly acknowledged people of God, ends the story in this part.

The third part has in it but one significant name, that of Zorobabel; after which the line lapses into utter obscurity. All is ruined and hopeless, save for God, till suddenly by a manifest divine intervention Jesus is born—a true resurrection, which justifies this third part as real numerical symbolism.

MATTHEW.

DIVISION 1. (Chap. i,–ii.)

The King, as promised.

SUBDIVISION 1. (Chap. i.)

Identified as such.

1 (1-17): By birth.

1 (1-6): The line beginning in grace with the heads of promise.

1.[1] THE [a]genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of [b]David, the son of [c]Abraham.
Abraham begat [d]Isaac; and Isaac begat [e]Jacob; and Jacob begat [f]Judas and his brethren; and Judas

a cf. Gen. 5. 1. *cf.* Lk. 3. 23-38.
b cf. 2 Sam. 7. 12-14. *cf.* Jer. 23. 5. Rom. 1. 3. *cf.* Rev. 22. 16.
c cf. Gen. 15. 4, 5. Gal. 3. 16.
d Gen. 21. 1-5.
e Gen. 25. 26.
f Gen. 29. 35. *cf.* Rev. 5. 5.

The genealogy shows the ruin hopeless but to God, in that Joseph, the last of the line here before Christ, is shown by it to be Jeconiah's son; and against Jeconiah prophecy had denounced (Jer. xxii. 30) that he should be (as to the throne) "childless, . . for no man of his seed should prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah." The consequence was pressed, as far back as Irenæus, that here the direct line of descent is smitten with a curse, while yet it was not deprived of the legal title: it could hand on to another, therefore, that which could be of no advantage to itself. The marriage of Joseph and Mary was, in the wisdom of God, the means of accomplishing this. The Lord's birth from Mary made Him the real Son of David (Luke i. 32) while the marriage of His mother made Him David's legal heir.*

The genealogy thus shows the ruin of man in the fullest way, while the grace and power of God are declared abundantly. The number 14, thus stamped upon it three times over, is certainly the number of witness (2) combined with that of completeness (7), if we interpret it by its natural factors; if on the other hand we take the *dekatessares* (ten-four) of the Greek, then the testing of responsible man is what is indicated; and assuredly that would be the substance of the testimony given by the genealogy all through. It is in fact the testimony of the ages up to Christ, which were the ages of human probation as characterized by that "Old Covenant," as books of which the records have come down to us. If the common chronology be admitted, its 4,000 years of human history to its centre in the birth of Jesus is only the "ten-four" in a more emphatic way ($10^3 \times 4$), while if we apply it to the birth of him of whom our Isaac was the undoubted Autitype, it is the 100 years of Abraham's age at which, after the utter failure of nature, the promised seed was born, multiplied by 40, the symbol of perfect probation. Thus by different pathways the same result is reached: God has stamped His meaning on all this too deep for erasure. Paul sums it up substantially for us in his declaration that, "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6). This is the moral on man's side of preparation for Christ: we have to be brought *down*, not up, to receive Him; and all God's previous dealings with man enforce this conclusion.

* There are different ways of understanding this, and it is a difficulty that Zorobabel and Salathiel (or Shealtiel) appear also in Mary's genealogy in Luke, which we may indeed assume, with Lange, to be simply a coincidence of similar names, as with Jacob and Joseph in the list in Matthew, though these are of common occurrence. Zorobabel, "born in Babel," may be conjectured to have been also a name common at that period, though we have no proof of this. The names before and after have no similarity; and it is not easily seen how, if the lines come together here, they should have been separate before this meeting.

There is another difficulty in these names coming together in a line of *natural* descent, such as that in Luke is allowed to be, that the Zerubbabel of the returned captives was not the *natural* son of Shealtiel, but of Pedaiah (1 Chron. iii. 18, 19); and of Shealtiel, it is supposed, only according to the levirate law (Deut. xxv. 5, 6).

begat [g] Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat [h] Esrom; and Esrom begat [i] Aram; and Aram begat [j] Aminadab; and Aminadab begat [k] Naasson; and Naasson begat [l] Salmon; and Salmon begat [m] Booz of [n] Rahab; and Booz begat Obed of [o] Ruth; and Obed begat [p] Jesse; and Jesse begat [q] David the king.

[g] Gen. 38. 11-30. [h] Ruth 4. 18-22. [i] 1 Chr. 2. 5, 9. [j] 1 Chr. 2. 10. [k] Num. 2. 3. [l] 1 Chr. 2. 11, 12. [m] Ruth 2.

1, etc. *n* *cf.* Josh. 6. 17, 25 with Heb. 11. 31. *o* *cf.* Ruth 4. 13-17; *cf.* Deut. 23. 3 with Rom. 8. 3. *p* 1 Sa. 16. 1; *cf.* Is. 11. 1. *q* 1 Sa. 17. 12, 58.

So much then as to the Son of David; but we have still to see Him in this genealogy also as Son of Abraham—the Isaac, therefore, whose name means "laughter;" His advent "glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." In this way we shall find a feature of the register here appeal to us of which as yet we have taken no notice, but which would strike a Jew at once.

The presence of women's names in a genealogy was thoroughly exceptional. As links in the chain of descent they might be needed, as where there were different wives and it was needful to indicate from which of these a title was derived. Now in the first part here there are three women mentioned, of whom two at least cannot be on this account—Rahab and Ruth; which naturally would imply that in the case of the other—Tamar—this was not the reason either. In her case also the twin-birth of Zerah is referred to, as if to remind us of the history connected with her; as, again, in the case of Bathsheba afterwards, who is not called by her name, but as "her of Urias:" which flashes upon us a history worse than Tamar's, both for the actors and the relationships involved.

Indeed these names are not what we should expect in such a list—in a register of descent of the King of Israel—the great King foretold. They are all probably, three certainly, Gentiles; two are Canaanites—of a race under the curse.

Here, then, the Abrahamic blessing begins to unfold to us: just in the most indisputable part of the genealogy, where no Jew could contest their right to a place in the ancestry of his Messiah, these women's names are found. What a light they shed, with all their misery and wretchedness, upon His title as the Son of Abraham! But there is more than this: apart from their birth-heritage, three out of the four are marked out by the sins of their own lives. Tamar, the first of all, actually finds her place here through her sin—her place in connection with the Saviour of sinners! Is it not what we all do? is it not our first claim upon Him that we are sinners and He the Saviour of sinners? Thus we find our title, through His grace, in that which would otherwise drive us to despair, —in that which involves no labor on our part to reach, a title as to which it is not possible to deceive ourselves, which it cannot be presumption on our part to plead. Would we take our place even with Tamar? Then Tamar's name given here may be our encouragement — Tamar's name as one of whom He is not ashamed!

The second name is that of Rahab, drawn out of the obscurity in which in the Old Testament her later history is involved, and brought forward in strange connection with a princely family of the house of Judah. As wife of Salmon and mother of Boaz she takes her place here in the genealogy of the Lord; and we may surely say, in view of the epistle to the Hebrews, and the epistle of James, that salvation by faith is the lesson of her history. Thus we have the second great principle of the gospel proclaimed in her.

Ruth is morally a very different person from Tamar and Rahab. She is a beautiful example of faith that lives and roots itself against every wind of adversity. We know her history well, for the Spirit of God has dwelt upon it at large for our edification and encouragement: against her, whatever personally she might be, stood the sentence of the law that "an Ammonite or a Moabite shall not come into the congregation of the Lord: even to their tenth generation they shall not come into the congregation of the Lord forever" (Deut. xxiii. 3).

2 (6-11): Decay.

[2] And David begat [r] Solomon of her of Urias; and Solomon begat [s] Roboam; and Roboam begat [t] Abia; and Abia begat [u] Asa; and Asa begat [v] Josaphat; and Josaphat begat [w] Joram; and Joram begat [x] Ozias; and Ozias begat [y] Joatham; and Joatham begat [z] Ahaz; and Ahaz begat [a] Ezekias; and Ezekias begat [b] Manasses; and Manasses begat [c] Amon; and Amon begat [d] Josias; and Josias begat [e] Jechonias and his brethren at the time of the [f] transportation to Babylon.

3 (12-17): Manifestation and resurrection.

[3] And after the transportation to Babylon Jechonias begat [g] Salathiel; and Salathiel begat [h] Zorobabel; and Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; and Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; and Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Joseph the [i] husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

All the generations, therefore, from Abraham to David are [j] fourteen generations; and from David to the transportation to Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the transportation to Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.

2 (18-25): Son of God and Saviour.

2. Now the [k] birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: his mother Mary having been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the

r 2 Sa. 12. 24. *cf.* 2 Sa. 11. 1-27.
s 1 Chr. 3. 10. 1 Ki. 12. 1, etc. 2 Chr. chs. 10, 11, 12.
t 2 Chr. 12. 16. 2 Chr. 13. 1, etc.
u 2 Chr. 14, 1, etc.
v 2 Chr. 17. 1, etc.
w 2 Chr. 21. 1, etc.
x 2 Chr. 26. 1, etc.
y 2 Chr. 26. 23, etc.
z 2 Chr. 27. 9.
a 2 Chr. 28. 27.
b 2 Chr. 32. 33, etc.
c 2 Chr. 33. 20.
d 2 Chr. 33. 25.
e 2 Chr. 36. 1-13.
f 2 Chr. 36. 14-23.
g 1 Chr. 3. 17.
h Ezra 3. 2. Hag. 1. 1, etc.
i vers. 18-20, 24. Lk. 2. 6.
j *cf.* Ex. 12. 6; *cf.* Gal. 4. 4.
k Lk. 1. 26-38.

Thus she is legally excluded from the very people with whom her faith unites her. But grace is sovereign in her case as in every other. She and her children come into the congregation of the Lord. It is interesting to see that in the rigid observance of this law, David himself, only third in succession, would have been excluded, the reign of law would have excluded the saviour-king himself; so also would it have been as to his great Antitype.

The only woman that remains at this end of the line is not mentioned by her name but as "her of Uriah," her history being thus fully, if concisely indicated. In this case grace reigns, even with regard to a saint's transgression; and this completes the gospel as we find it in the genealogy. The salvation which it brings is for sinners, by faith, apart from law, and eternal. Thus Christ as the Seed of Abraham is fully declared.

Mary's name at the end of the genealogy has another meaning: it shows us Christ as the Seed of the Woman, out of weakness manifesting strength, out of passiveness, the energy of the Overcomer, the Conqueror who with His bruised heel stamps down the serpent.

The genealogy of Jesus Christ tells us, therefore, much of Him. It is more than possible that, had we only eyes to see it, every name in this list would prove itself significant, and have its own story to tell in connection with Him. But it is not mine to attempt this: yet of these so carefully numbered generations, I cannot believe there is one that is not worthy of being so cared for. If we had worked believingly in this direction, how would the work have been repaid!

2. But we are now to look at the Lord in another character, in which no genealogy can tell Him out. Here He is Son of God, the suited King of a Kingdom greater far than that of David, though that of David is included in it. Necessarily then the fact of His divine Sonship has a large place in Matthew, by which this Gospel connects more with John than the other Synoptic Gospels do. The

[l] Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a [m] just man, and unwilling to [n] expose her, was minded to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold, an [o] angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, [p] son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name [q] Jesus, for *he* shall save his people [r] from their sins. Now all this came to pass that that might be [s] fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: [t] "Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which is, being interpreted, [u] "God with us." And Joseph, being awaked from his sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and [v] took unto him his wife; and knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born * son; and he called his name Jesus.

* Most editors now read "a son;" but it is doubtful.

[l] Lk. 1. 35. *cf.* Gen. 3. 15. *cf.* Jno. 1. 14. *cf.* Heb. 10. 5.
[m] ch. 5. 32.
[n] *ctr.* Jno. 8. 4, 5.
[o] ch. 2. 13, 19.
[p] ver. 16. *cf.* ch. 22. 42.
[q] Lk. 1. 31. *cf.* Josh. 1. 1, 2. *cf.* Phil. 2. 9, 10.
[r] *cf.* Acts 3. 26. *cf.* Tit. 2. 14.
[s] *cf.* ch. 2. 6, 17, 18, 23.
[t] Is. 7. 14. Is. 9. 6.
[u] *cf.* Jno. 1. 1–3, 14. *cf.* Jno. 8. 58. *cf.* Jno. 15. 9. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 19.
[v] *cf.* Lk. 2. 5.

claim of it becomes the great and critical point in His presentation to Israel, and is that which, more than anything else, brings about His rejection.

As in the case of the genealogy, however, it is still Joseph who is prominent here. We have his conflict with himself, the visit of the angel to him which dispels his doubts, his marriage and naming of the child by which he accepts it as his own. Joseph is here in all this manifestly what the genealogy makes him, the legal heir of David's line, and the representative of its hopes and responsibilities. In Luke, the Gospel of the Manhood, it is on the other hand, and as naturally, Mary who is in the fore-front, and Joseph is only outlined among the figures in the background.

Mary is seen at the beginning in question, if not under reproach. The singular honor which God's grace has conferred on her, is too great to be received unhesitatingly, even by the people of God themselves. We cannot believe for joy: the thing is too good to be true; the will to believe is not sufficient to accomplish faith. For so far is this from being credulity, that it requires all the more decisive proof, the more that for which we seek it awakens all the desire of our hearts. This is all the truth, (whatever the amount may be) contained in the strong assertion of the poet,—

> "There lives more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds:"

although the last line can scarcely express his thought accurately. Joseph here, as a righteous man, but in perplexity, thinks of a half measure: he will give her a writing of divorce without statement of the cause, and put her away. But the appearance of an angel to him in a dream resolves his doubt and changes his purpose.

It is quite in character with the distance maintained in Matthew's Gospel, that the angel appears only in a dream. It is so again with the Magi afterwards, and with Joseph himself once more, in Egypt. In Luke, on the contrary, the angel appears openly, to Zacharias as well as to Mary. The difference does not seem founded upon a personal one, as Zacharias exhibits more unbelief than Joseph. It may be connected with the failure of David's house, and especially of Jeconiah's line which Joseph represents; and the blessing comes to him in a veiled form answering to this. Mary is not and could not be of Jeconiah's line, and his connection with Jesus is only by his marriage with her. Yet grace gives him in this way a place of unspeakable blessing.

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chap. ii.)

Borne witness to and rejected: the Nazarene.

1 (1-12): God the Creator and the men of natural knowledge.

1. NOW, Jesus having been [w]born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, [x]magi from the east arrived at Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that

[w] Lk. 2. 1-20.
[x] *cf.* 1 Ki. 10. 1, 2.
cf. Is. 60. 3.

The angel addresses him as son of David with the confirmatory announcement of the divine origin of the Child that is to be born, and whose work requires no less than a divine Person to perform. His name, Jesus, or Joshua ("Jehovah the Saviour") is declared to be no mere name, or indicative of some abstract truth, or of some principle to be developed in relation to His history. Nay, Jehovah's people are *His* people, and *He* therefore is Jehovah and Saviour. He is the full reality of His name: "*He* shall save His people from their sins."

Prophecy had already declared the wondrous truth as to His Person; the primal one as to the woman's Seed had been supplemented by one more distinct which plainly referred to it and filled it out. "The virgin" of Isaiah, who was to be with child, and whose Son was to be called Emmanuel, points back to and defines what had long been a hope in the hearts of men. The woman's Seed would indeed be that, without the co-partnership with man ordained by the Creator for the continuance of the race; and this by no mere miracle which would still leave the child to be a man merely, though of superhuman birth. No: his name Emmanuel would be the explanation of the unique fact; "God" would in Him be "with us;" which the angel's words declare to mean "Jehovah," come to deliver us from that which was the necessary barrier to intimacy, and *in Himself* to bring God and man together!

And Emmanuel is distinctly in the prophecy the King of David's line, upon whose shoulder the government should be (Isa. ix. 5, 6). We see that the prophecy belongs rather to Matthew's picture of the Lord than John's, as we might have thought it; although evidently these come near together here. As King He is at once the Representative of His people, and "Mighty God" who as "Father of eternity"* shall settle all things upon everlasting foundations —Power alone cannot accomplish this: God must become man, the King must be crowned with thorns and be the Saviour. The whole circle of truth is needed here: the Highest must become the lowest; it is His glory: only the Highest could come down so low.

Joseph, awaked out of His sleep, does as the angel of the Lord has bidden him, and takes his wife. The divine intervention does not set aside the Creator's ordinance, nor God put His seal upon human asceticism. Judaism, in fact, knew nothing of this dishonor done to the God of nature. The Child is born and named: and "David in spirit" once more calls his Son his Lord.

SUBD. 2.

So the King has come—the true King, for whom all is waiting, for whom all still waits: for He came but to be rejected, and immediately He has come, we find Him rejected, by the very people who for centuries had been taught to expect Him, and carefully prepared to receive Him. He is worshipped by those from afar; but when He comes to His own, they have no heart for Him; and this is discovered before He has even been personally before their eyes. There is but the announcement that He has come, and we see at once what afterwards they formally declare, that they have "no king but Cæsar." There is no help but to leave them, then, to Cæsar.

Gentiles indeed receive and worship Him: yes, Gentiles, but not *the* Gentiles. The special link between God and Israel is broken by their unbelief, and now the question is to be asked, "Is He not the God of the Gentiles also?" From

* Not, as in our common version, "Everlasting Father."

hath been born [y]King of the Jews? for we have seen his [z]star in the east and are come to [a]worship him. And when Herod the king heard it, he was [b]troubled, and all [c]Jerusalem with him; and, having gathered together

[y] *cf.* ch. 27. 11, 29, 37, 42. [z] *cf.* Num. 24. 17. *ctr.* Amos 5. 26. [a] *cf.* Ps. 72. 9-11. [b] *cf.* ch. 21. 38; *cf.* Jno. 1. 11. [c] *cf.* ch. 23. 37-39.

God's side this can only be answered as the apostle answers it (Rom. iii. 29), that He surely is. But in fact only a remnant really receive the Lord, and these are the subjects of a divine work in their souls. This, however, is John's testimony and not Matthew's; while in Matthew the worship of the magi, while Jerusalem is but "troubled" at their coming, shows the impending dispensational change.

Already the end of Judah's "sceptre"—her tribal rod of authority—as predicted by Jacob, is fairly within sight, and the Edomite Herod reigns over the land. The true King is forced out of it, but only to renew from the beginning in Egypt the history of the people in the sight of God, that He may (as He will yet) show them His grace. But this involves much more for Him through whom the blessing is to come to them, and is no release to Him from the path which ends but at Calvary. He returns, after Herod is dead, to the land of Israel, only to find Archelaus in the place and reigning in the spirit of his father Herod, and to take His own place at Nazareth as the "Branch of Jesse," returning to the lowliness out of which David sprang, but with the hopes of much more than David's house resting upon Him. But we must look at all this more in detail.

1. The King, the Lord of glory, is come into the world, and has to be announced among His own people by men from afar—by Gentiles. Yet not only had prophets from long since prophesied of Him, and the scribes could put their finger upon the place of His birth, but Daniel had predicted the exact time of His coming. Heaven had been recently giving its witness also, immediately before and at His coming. Zacharias and Elizabeth had announced in their own child His fore-runner. An angelic vision had brought the shepherds to the manger where He lay. Simeon had blessed God for His salvation seen, and with Anna had spoken of Him to many in Jerusalem itself. And yet the city is only startled for a moment from its slumber when "magi from the East" come with the inquiry, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" and with the declaration that a star had been seen by them as the sign of His birth,—a sign so fully believed on their part that here they were, from their own far off land, to seek and to worship Him.

The magi were the great natural observers of their day, though this connected itself largely with practices which from them have got the name of "magic." They were men of occult science, the astrologers and soothsayers, the interpreters of dreams and auguries. True knowledge in them was variously mingled with imposture and with superstition; so that they figure as variously. No doubt, we may find in those who were real among them the affecting expression of minds that, having lost hold of primitive revelation, turned to search the dim border land of the unseen, to dreams and omens, and the face of the far off heavens, to find that God who was not far off but nigh at hand; and here in these travelers we may see one supreme example of God meeting such in their own way, to lift them out of such groping into the light indeed.

They had heard of a "King of the Jews" and assuredly something more than merely that. Though He were King of the Jews, yet His coming had to do with them, awakening expectant joy and reverence in their hearts. The prophecy of Balaam is the only one of which we know, which could in their minds connect such an one with a "star;" but this, though of a Gentile and to Gentiles, if it were traditionally known to them, must have come through 1600 years of most uncertain conveyance to reach them thus. Besides the Jews scattered through the East, furnished a more direct means of knowledge. Balaam had said noth-

all the chief [d]priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is [e]written through the prophet: "And thou, Bethlehem, [in the] land of Juda, art in no wise least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come forth a [f]Ruler who shall be a [g]shepherd to my people Israel."

[d] *cf.* Mal. 2. 7. *cf.* Jer. 18. 18. *cf.* Lk. 11. 52.
[e] Mi. 5. 2. *cf.* Jno. 7. 42.
[f] Is. 9. 6, 7.
[g] *cf.* Zech. 13. 7. *cf.* Jno. 10. 11; *cf.* Rev. 2. 27.

ing about a star to herald the King: it was the King himself who was to be the star. Yet the prophecy was couched in terms natural to one of the *magi;* a class to which the seer himself seems clearly to have belonged; and the appearance of a supernatural star to men of this kind, accustomed to see portents in the heavens, might naturally connect itself with such a representation. The star was surely supernatural. No conjunction of planets, such as Kepler pointed out, could be spoken of as a star, nor have begotten so perfect a conviction in the minds of men well acquainted with the heavens. It was, in fact, a beautiful witness of the God of nature to the men of nature,—of One not under bondage to the uniformity in general so necessary to us, that we may have a stable world to reckon on. But this is only a suited back-ground on which the more plainly to display Himself as the Living and Almighty God transcending far the universe He has made, and willing in love so to display Himself.

What messengers these from among the Gentiles, to awaken, if it might be, Israel to jealousy. They come to Jerusalem, expecting, doubtless, at the capital city, to find all men ready to greet the inquirer with a gospel message. They come to find an Edomite on the throne of Israel, and with all the old Edomite hatred in his heart, craftily though he may hide it, and even gather the chief priests and elders together, to hasten them on the way. These, too, can tell all about the place of Christ's birth textually. They give a response which must have stricken the blood-stained tyrant to the heart; but of faith in God they show nothing. They answer that Christ is to be born "in Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet: And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art in no wise least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a Ruler, who shall be a shepherd to my people Israel."

Such, literally, are the words they use: and one might suppose that in using them they meant to inflict a wound that Herod should not be able to impute to them, but which should come home to him as the voice of God Himself. And so it was, though the words are not found in Micah just as they quote them here. For Hebrew was not any more the language of Israel as a whole; and it was quite the custom to paraphrase, rather than quote literally a scripture appealed to. The Hebrew, besides smaller differences, does not give "shepherd" in this passage, but simply "Ruler." The Greek of the Septuagint follows the Hebrew: so that the variation is their own. And yet who can deny that the one word is God's thought as to the other? He who had sent Moses to the sheepfolds to learn how to guide His people in the wilderness—He who in the land had chosen David and "taken him from following the ewes great with young" (demanding therefore, the tenderest care) to feed and guide with no less tenderness, the flock of His pasture—He had indeed consecrated the "shepherd" as the picture of the Ruler whom He had appointed and would raise up. There is but One who has out-done this picture.

The scribes show, then, in their variation from the letter their acquaintance with the character of Messiah as prophecy reveals Him. But we hear no more of them. They cite the text for Herod; and they do it well; but they have no heart for the One they testify to. They are like sign-posts upon a road on which they do not move an inch. They pass on the word to those who value it; Herod himself also becoming the instrument in guiding worshipers to the feet of Jesus. They only, obedient to the Word, turn their faces toward Bethlehem; and as

Then Herod, having privately called the magi, inquired of them exactly the time that the star appeared; and sending them to Bethlehem he said, [h]Go and search out exactly about the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me back word, that [i]I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king they departed; and lo, the star which they had seen in the east went before them, until it came and [j]stood over where the young child was. And when they saw the star, they [k]rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and [l]worshipped him. And opening their treasures, they presented unto him [m]gifts; [n]gold, and [o]frankincense, and [p]myrrh. And, being divinely [q]instructed in a dream not to return to Herod, they withdrew into their own country by another way.

2 (13-18): Under death-sentence from man, God's Substitute for men.

2. And when they had withdrawn, behold, an [r]angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and [s]flee into Egypt, and be there until I tell thee: for Herod is

h cfr. Is. 2. 2, 3.
i cf. Ps. 18. 44.
j cf. Num. 9. 15-23.
cf. Is. 60. 3.
k Ps. 105. 3.
cf. Is. 66. 10-12.
l ver. 2.
cf. Is. 49. 22, 23.
m cf. Ps. 45. 12.
cf. Ps. 72. 10.
n cf. Is. 60. 6, 9.
cf. Is. 61. 6.
cf. Hag. 2. 7, 8.
o cf. Lev. 2. 1.
cf. Song 3. 6, 7.
p cf. Song 1. 13 with Jno. 19. 39, 40.
cf. Gal. 6. 14.
q ver. 22, etc.
r ch. 1. 20.
cf. ch. 4. 11.
cf. Luke 22. 43.
s cf. ch. 4. 12.
cf. ch. 10. 23, 24.

they do so, the star which they had lost by the way, appears again and goes before them, until it comes and stands over where the young child is. It does not leave them now till they are face to face with Him they seek.

Then they worship. It is but a humble house, we may be sure, and there are in it but a young mother and her babe. But they worship,—worship, not the mother but the Babe. Divinely taught, they pour out their gifts at His feet, "gold and frankincense and myrrh." The Church of old seems almost unitedly to have interpreted them as, in the gold, the recognition of His royalty; in the frankincense, the acknowledgement of His Deity; while the myrrh, used afterwards at His burial, was taken thus to be the anticipation of His death. We might be disposed, from the use of these things in Scripture, to take the gold as the recognition of His divine glory; the frankincense as the fragrance of a life lived, as none other ever was, for God. But to some of these things as we know, His disciples were long after strangers, nor could we argue that the magi knew the real significance of what they did. But the worship was real, and the great joy with which they had greeted the star on its reappearance, was we may be sure, more than justified in the result.

They are divinely instructed in a dream not to return to Herod; God again thus meeting them in their own peculiar way, and they return by another road to the place from which they came.

2. And now Joseph also is warned by an angel of the Lord of impending danger at the hands of Herod, and flees by divine direction with the young child and His mother into Egypt. There is no manifest display of power made. The angels that appeared, to announce a Saviour, do not encircle with chariots and hosts the infant King. Everything marks that He has come to take no exceptional place in this way from the common lot of men. Nay, it is a necessity of the work which He has come to do that He should stoop to this; and in subjection to these human conditions, manifest His exaltation above fallen man.

Prophecy, however, has marked out His course all through; and it is that this may be fulfilled that He goes down to Egypt. But just here we find what calls for special examination. The prophecy to be fulfilled is that of Hosea (xi. 1): "Out of Egypt have I called My Son;" but this does not, at first

about to seek the young child, to [t]destroy him. And he arose and took the young child and his mother by night, and withdrew into Egypt; and he was there until the [u]death of Herod: that that might be [v]fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Out of Egypt have I called my son."

t *cf.* Luke 13. 31-33. *cf.* Acts 4. 25-28.
u *cf.* 1 Sam. 26. 10.
v Hos. 11. 1. *cf.* Heb. 11. 26, 27.

sight, appear to be a prophecy at all; and certainly not a prophecy of Christ. Any one looking at it would say that it was simply a rebuke of Israel as a nation, for repaying with apostasy and Baal-worship the love which God had shown in their redemption of old. He had them taken out of the misery of their boudage, and called them to adoption as His own family among the families of the earth. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called My son out of Egypt." But how had they repaid it? "As they [the prophets] called them, so they went from them: they sacrificed to the Baalim, and burned incense to graven images." This, of course, could only speak of Israel as a nation.

And yet the application of the first verse to the Lord is no *mere* application. It is not that such a thing took place now in relation to Him who was Son of God by a fuller title, as corresponded to that which had taken place of old in regard to God's "first-born," Israel. The manner of quotation is much too precise for that: the Lord going down into Egypt definitely to fulfil what is spoken by Hosea. Evidently there is here something deeper in the way of fulfilment than we are accustomed to. It is common to say that we have here an example of typical prophecy; but we must understand what we mean, if we say this. For certainly it could only be in fragments of the national history that there could be any typical reference to the Lord; and what follows in the prophet indicates only entire and emphatic contrast, as we have seen. We must, therefore, have some guiding principle to enable us to discern, with any certainty, what is typical from what is not.

Now in Isaiah xlix. we have such a principle: for of whom is it written: "Jehovah hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath He made mention of my name, . . . and said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified?" This, one would say, must be the nation; but immediately we hear a voice that is *not* the nation's: "Then I said, I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nought and in vain; yet surely my judgment is with Jehovah, and my work with my God."

Now notice the claim: "And now saith Jehovah, that formed ME from the womb to be His Servant, to bring Jacob again to Him: Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in Jehovah's eyes, and my God shall be my strength. And He said, It is a light thing that Thou shouldest be my Servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give Thee for a light to the Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation to the ends of the earth."

Here, to a Christian, there can be no doubt of the application: it is Christ *alone* who fulfils this. But then He is also the true Servant, formed from the womb to be this, and the *Israel* in whom God will be glorified. Here Christ and Israel are both identified and distinguished at the same time. Israel, that had failed utterly,—failed even in hearing this glorious Person when He came,—Israel comes to fulfil its destiny only in and through Christ, who comes of Israel; who is (according to the prophetic language) the lowly "Shoot" from the cut down "stem of Jesse," and the "Branch" that should "grow out of his roots;" and upon whom, in full complacency and in seven-fold power, "the Spirit of Jehovah was to "rest" (Isa. xi). In Him, the "Son born" to them, Israel nationally, is yet to revive. His glory involves their blessing. He begins anew for God their history, purged of its failure and its shame; and hence comes the necessary application of such passages as that in Hosea, "Out of Egypt have I called My son."

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked by the magi, was exceedingly [w]enraged, and sent forth and slew all the male children that were in Bethlehem, and in all its borders, from two years old and under, according to the time that he had learned exactly of the magi. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken through [x]Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "A voice was heard in Rama, weeping and great lamentation: [y]Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."

3 (19-25): The return as Sprout of Jesse (Nazarene)

3. But when Herod was dead, behold, an [z]angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the [a]land of Israel: for they are [b]dead that sought the young child's life. And he arose and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel; but having heard that Archelaus reigned over

w Ps. 71. 4.
x Jer. 31. 15.
y Gen. 35. 16-20. *cf.* Lam. 1. 4.
z ver. 13.
a *cf.* Ezek. 36. 1-20.
b ver. 15.

Yet how differently is it fulfilled in these two cases! For Him there could be no captivity, no house of bondage. For them this had been the discipline needed, the "furnace," because of the dross that the Refiner must purge out. Typically, for us all, it speaks of the bondage to sin in our natural state, out of which a divine voice alone can "call" us. For Him, of all this there was nothing, and could be nothing. Egypt shelters, not ensnares, nor takes captive. He has no natural state to be delivered from. The world of nature, had He desired it, would have yielded Him all it had. The Voice that called Him out of it called Him but to the work for which He had come; and so the "favor," even "with man" was exchanged for rejection, as also for one dread hour, the "favor with God" seemed to be eclipsed in the darkness of abandonment, only to shine out, however, immediately in the glory of His resurrection and return to heaven.

All, then, should be clear as to the application of Hosea. The next quotation that we find here, which is from Jeremiah, and which speaks of Rachel weeping over her dead, is introduced after a very different manner, "*then* was fulfilled," not "that it might be." This is really but an application. When Bethlehem mourned her babes slaughtered by Herod, then it was as if Rachel from her grave close by were repeating her lamentation. But Rachel must be comforted here also, in a deeper way than in the prophet. *He* had escaped, who by and by would freely offer Himself to redeem from the power of the grave, and bring back to a better life the heirs of death.

3. But the days of the Edomite were drawing to an end; and soon the angel of the Lord appeared once more to Joseph in a dream, with words that bring back those that set the face of Moses the deliverer toward the people to whom he was commissioned: "they are dead that sought the young child's life." But only had one tyrant succeeded another, so that they do not return to Judea, where Archelaus had begun his short but cruel reign, but into Galilee, and they came and dwelt in Galilee in a city called Nazareth. In this, too, prophecy was to be fulfilled,—not a specific one, but the tenor of the prophets generally: "He shall be called a Nazarene."

Galilee means "circle" or "circuit;" and here was the place in which, though but for a short time through the unbelief that rejected Him, Israel's lost blessings were to return more gloriously. Part of Israel's inheritance as it was, it was now called, as elsewhere stated, "Galilee of the Gentiles," because so full of Gentiles. There the ruin of the people was most plainly to be seen; and thus it was the fitting place for grace to be shown; it would be grace *there* most manifestly. So, when the Child returns, the land is claimed, as it were, once

[c] Judea in place of Herod his father, he was afraid to go there; but having been divinely [d] instructed in a dream he withdrew into the parts of [e] Galilee. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth; so that that should be [f] fulfilled which was spoken through the prophets, "He shall be called a [g] Nazarene."

[c] *cf.* Jno. 7. 1.
[d] ch. 1. 20.
[e] ch. 4. 14, 15.
cf. ch. 28. 16.
[f] ch. 1. 22. vers. 15, 17.
[g] *cf.* John 1. 46 with Is. 53. 2, 3.
cf. Jno. 15. 1 with Is. 11. 1, 10; *cf.* Judg. 13. 7 with Heb. 7. 26.

more: it is the only place in the New Testament where the expression is used, "the land of *Israel*." Such it shall be yet, when owned in the future as Emmanuel's land (Isa. viii. 8)

And this connects with what we have had before, and with that to which our attention is once again and more distinctly directed in this summing up of various prophecies. "He shall be called a Nazarene." This was, of course, a name actually given to the Lord, and generally in scorn, from the place to which in general His birth was accredited, and in which so large a proportion of His life on earth was spent. Nazareth was, it seems, nowhere in very good repute, but especially among the Pharisees and traditionalists. It had no history, no memories, was consecrated by no great names; and its own name, which seems to have been but a feminine form of *netzer*, a "sprout" or "shoot," may even refer to this. It was thus expressive of lowliness, if yet of life, and identical with the word in Isaiah xi. 1, where Messiah is spoken of as the "rod" or "shoot out of the stem of Jesse;" and here His greatness and His lowliness are seen together.

The stem has been cut down; it is better characterized as that of Jesse than of David, for royalty no more attaches to it: and thus the Son of David comes into no outward state or glory, but the opposite. And yet Jesse bears witness in his name also that "Jehovah exists;" and He is the God of resurrection. The Sprout, if lowly, has yet the energy of life in it. In Him the cut down tree is to revive, and to eclipse all its former glories. He is the "righteous branch" of Jeremiah (xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15), and Zechariah's Branch, Jehovah's Servant, who is to build the temple of Jehovah, and bear the glory (vi. 12). His lowliness is but the stooping of strength in love and to service,—even to death, because His work is resurrection. How great and wonderful is this lowliness, when once we penetrate its real character! how necessary, when once we have understood the need which He came to relieve.

Here then is the key to His position; and it is manifestly the one in which we find Him throughout Matthew's Gospel. For this Branch is to reign, and be a Priest upon His throne. Not only Israel's burden is He lifting, but our own. For Israel in their long probation, in which they failed so utterly, were only the representatives of men—all men—our own: and therefore ours also is the royal Saviour. And this expression implies all this. Nazarene He may be called from opposite sides, for opposite reasons. Those who would dishonor, those who honor Him, here unite together. The Cross is a death of shame, but it is His glory. Up in the glory of heaven, amid the universal homage there, when the apostle turns to see the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," he beholds what might seem but the entire contrast to it—"a Lamb as it had been slain."

Div. 2.

The King having thus been set before us, the second division of the Gospel presents to us now the Kingdom as announced by the herald of it, and then by the King, heaven opening now more wondrously than at His birth, to proclaim Him as the object of its delight, the Son of the Father, and to anoint Him publicly as the "Christ" of God.

There are three subdivisions here: the first of which shows us the King once more identified, as now coming forward, after thirty years' interval of silence, to take up His public work, and put forth His claim to the Kingdom, already declared to be "at hand."

The second gives us the King's own testimony to the Kingdom, with the signs accompanying this — the broad seal of heaven set to that testimony in the sight of all men.

The third is the unveiling of the Kingdom in its inner spirit and holiness, as declared by the King Himself, in what is commonly known as "the Sermon on the Mount." This manifestly completes the announcement. In all this part we find distinctly the Lord as "the Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Rom. xv. 8). The Kingdom as yet declared is in its Jewish and Old Testament form, Israel not having yet rejected Him with whom the fulfilment of all the promises is bound up. It is only after it is clearly seen that they will do this that, in the thirteenth chapter we have the parenthetic form of the Kingdom announced, in the meantime of His rejection by His people; now taking therefore its Gentile or rather its universal, New Testament form. But it must not be imagined, on this account, that our own interest in these chapters will be diminished. Not only is the whole range of Christ's interests our own as Christians, but also we shall find that there are principles all through most fully applying to us, and not infrequently that their relation to Israel really intensifies their force in relation to ourselves. But our first consideration must be what is in truth their strict meaning and application; and we need not fear that the truth when we have found it can possibly be less fruitful and profitable than what is not this. It would be disloyalty to God to believe it.

SUBD. 1.

1. At the beginning—as we are now—of the New Testament, it is natural to turn to consider the relation of the Old Testament to it; and this is pressed upon us in an especial manner by the Old Testament apparition which meets us at the threshold of the New in the person of John the Baptist. That he should go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elias, is declared of him by his father Zacharias; and Christ Himself says of him, "If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come." It is not necessary to discuss here his exact relation to Malachi's closing prophecy. It is at least plain that he reproduced in his character and preaching the typical prophet whom even in his garb he very much resembled; and his call to repentance is only giving voice to what the law and the prophets united to proclaim.

It is divinely significant that the long interval of about four centuries should intervene between the two portions of God's inspired Word—His twofold testimony to man; and it is equally significant that the general character of the last prophecy should be that of lament over the utter failure of the people, their history closing at the same time, as if there were no use in any longer giving record of their doings. This is in fact the final account of man as man, the genealogies of Chronicles also ending, and the New Testament having only *one* genealogy, as it has practically only the history of One, the Second Man in contrast with the first, and (thank God) He the last Adam of a new creation.

The ages up to Christ were ages of probation, the law itself being the typical form of this, and giving character to the whole canon of the Old Testament; but even the Gentiles, left in general, as it might seem, outside of positive direct dealings of God with them, only furnish in this way more perfectly their own contribution to the history of utter ruin. And the verdict of the ages as to these both is given us in Scripture itself in such a way as yet to cover both classes of mankind with this double condemnation.

The law tested man—the Jew—as to righteousness: and the verdict of the law as to those under it is (as the apostle declares) that there is none righteous, no, not one (Rom. iii. 10, 19). But the book of Job takes up also the best man of the Gentile world, and outside of law, to make him acknowledge as to himself the self-same condition (Job xlii. 6).

Again, the Gentile was left to his own wisdom—so dearly bought—to find out

DIVISION 2. (Chap. iii–vii.)

The Announcement of the Kingdom.

SUBDIVISION 1. (Chap. iii–iv. 11.)

The King once more identified.

1 (iii. 1-6): The Fore-runner.

1. NOW in those days cometh [h] John the Baptist, preaching in the [i] wilderness of Judea, and saying, [j] Repent ye: for the [k] kingdom of heaven * is at hand. For this

* Literally, "the heavens," and so elsewhere.

[h] Luke 1. 13, 63. Luke 3. 1-3. Mk. 1. 4, etc.
[i] Mark 1. 4. Lk. 7. 24-28.
[j] ch. 4. 17. Mark 6. 12. Acts 2. 38. Acts 20. 21.
[k] *cf.* Dan. 2. 44. *cf.* Dan. 4. 17, 25, 32. ch. 5. 3, etc.

by searching as to God. But, says the apostle, "when the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. i. 21). And yet again, the book of Ecclesiastes shows us a Jew—the wisest man on earth—setting himself upon the same quest, to find *by wisdom* as to God's ways with man, only in his turn to be utterly baffled (Eccles. viii. 16, 17).

In either case, God's coming in is man's only hope; in either case, men are lost utterly: every mode of trial, every assistance that can be given them, short of a salvation all of God, only the more confirms this.

The chosen people of God are the signal example of this. After having been in their deliverance from Egypt, and in the early part of their wilderness-journey, signal examples of the grace of God, they choose a legal covenant in self-confidence to their ruin. Their after-history is only that of the successive stages of their descent into it; until in their removal to Babylon the brand of their apostasy is put upon them. And though a remnant returns at the end of the seventy years predicted, the nation is owned no more as the people of God. Our Lord's own picture of them is but that of a "fig-tree planted in the vineyard," not of the vine restored. (See Isa. v.) And to this, too, with its plentiful leaves of profession, He comes seeking the fruit which should have accompanied them, and finds none.

The causes leading to this are as patent as they are instructive. The remnant returning from the Babylonian captivity find God with them as a remnant, and as far as they have faith to count upon Him; but there is no general return of heart to God even in these, and still less in the nation at large, nor could there be hope or profit in putting them back where they had been before, to follow once more the course that had led them to ruin. No, the only hope is in that ruin itself laid to heart, that it may produce in them that distrust of self in which they shall lay hold of God and find blessing.

Accordingly as a *people* they are not restored. The decree of Lo-ammi is not revoked (Hos. i. 9): the covenant is not renewed. They return under Gentile dominion, to build up again their temple and city; but they cannot bring back again what they have lost—that glorious Presence with them which was the distinctive feature of their national pre-eminence. The glory of God, which Ezekiel had seen definitely leave its place among them (xi. 22, 23), never returned; there was no ark of the covenant, and as a consequence no propitiatory mercy-seat to receive on the day of atonement the peace-making blood; there was no Urim and Thummim, the habitual means of consulting with God (Ezra ii. 63). While He could speak with them by a prophet, and did, this was an exceptional thing, and itself a sign of changed relationship.

Soon even the prophet's voice closed, and closed in words of sadness and rebuke. They were left with the long story of their past against them, all their hopes now concentrated in the Christ that was to come.

The only hope that ever was! the failure of all else would work indeed for blessing, if it only shut them up to that. The law with its condemnation, the types with their spiritual enigmas inviting solution, the prophecies with their

is he that was spoken of through [l]Esaias the prophet, saying, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight." Now John himself had his [m]clothing of camels' hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his [n]food was locusts and wild honey. Then [o]went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the country round about the Jordan, and were [p]baptized by him in the river Jordan, [q]confessing their sins.

[l] Is. 40. 3. Mark 1. 3. Luke 3. 4. John 1. 23.
[m] Mark 1. 6. *cf.* 2 Ki. 1. 8. *cf.* Zech. 13. 4.
[n] Lev. 11. 22. *cf.* Is. 7. 15, 16.
[o] Mark 1. 5. Luke 3. 7.
[p] Acts 18. 25. *cf.* Acts 19. 3–6; *ctr.* Acts 10. 47.
[q] Prov. 28. 13; *cf.* Dan. 9. 20; *cf.* 1 Ki. 8. 33.

clearer light, all alike pointed them forward to but One. Could they now fail to hear the Voice that spake to them? Would they not humbly, gladly accept the grace that was now held out to them?

Alas, it was in this interval that Pharisaism arose under the guise of patriotism and a zeal, all too late, for the Word which they had slighted. It took up fanatically the covenant under the condemnation of which they lay—not heeding, not accepting the condemnation. It took up the law to fence it in by fresh prohibitions from the possibility of a breach, but thus turned it into a mere and grievous yoke of ordinances, without life, which they could not deal with, and so ignored. Above all, it built them up in a self-righteousness which made them inaccessible to the grace of Christ, while ignorant and because of their ignorance of the righteousness of God which would have led them to repentance. They became thus the "ninety and nine just persons who needed no repentance," and who could therefore ask indignantly and decidedly, "Which of the Pharisees have believed on Him?"

To a nation of legalists thus it was that John the Baptist came. He came as the true voice of the law and the prophets, the spirit of the Old Testament incarnate in him. He came with the sound of his Master's feet behind him, and the announcement that at last the Kingdom of heaven was at hand. But the years that had passed had brought no recovery, and the promise had to come with a voice of warning in it. Crying in the wilderness, and not in the cities of the land,—there where Jehovah still remembered there had been shown the kindness of her youth, the love of her espousals, when Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the first-fruits of her increase (Jer. ii. 2, 3), and whither again He will have to allure her, in order that He may speak comfortably to her (Hos. ii. 14). There the cry of "Repent" was in its place.

It was the cry Isaiah had predicted, the voice of the herald before Jehovah Himself, urging them to prepare His way by taking their true place before Him, making His paths straight, as righteousness required. For he was "come in the way of righteousness," as the Lord afterwards testified of him, and could only "mourn" for a condition of things without God, and from which he must needs stand apart. Apart he is therefore, in the most uncompromising manner. While the son of a priest, he exercises no priestly functions. We never even find him at Jerusalem. His clothing even speaks of the desert, being of camel's hair, and with a leathern girdle about his loins. His food is locusts and wild honey. He acts in thorough consistency with the word to Jeremiah, "Let them return unto thee, but return not thou to them" (Jer. xv. 19).

His baptism confirms his preaching. He baptizes unto repentance, and in Jordan, the river of death: baptizes thus unto death; as it is also, according to the apostle (Rom. vi. 3, 4), with Christian baptism. But here we have to distinguish: Christian baptism is to Christ's death, for Christ has come and has died; but this is not true of John's baptism. His disciples simply take the place for themselves, "confessing their sins," of which death was the just due: as it is indeed, the stamp upon a fallen creature, as well as the penalty denounced by the law. In the history of the past, the waters of Jordan had been dried up, to give Israel entrance into the land which God had given them. Now

2 (iii. 7-12): His message of separating judgment.

2. But when he saw many of the [r]Pharisees and of the Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said unto them, O brood of [s]vipers, who hath shown you that ye should flee from the coming wrath? Bring forth, then, fruit [t]worthy of repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have [u]Abraham for [our] father:

r ch. 5. 20. cf. Luke 18. 10–14.
s ch. 12. 34. ch. 23. 33. Luke 3. 7–9.
t cf. Ps. 58. 4. cf. Lk 19. 8. with 2 Cor. 7. 9–11.
u cf. Is. 51. 1, 2 with Ezek. 33. 24–29; John 8. 33–44; cf. Rom. 2. 25–29 with Rom. 4. 9–12.

that history is traced back to Jordan itself, but this is dried up no longer: they do not pass through it, they are buried *in* it; their victory, then obtained, has after all ended in shameful defeat.

Here, then, we see the repentance that John preaches: not a vain promise of reform, not the reform itself, but what is primary and antecedent to all this, the taking true ground before God as hopeless and undone, with such a man as Job even, who, if the best man of his day, and so pronounced by God, found his place here in self-abhorrence.

Were repentance the same as reformation, or "doing better," as is more vaguely said, we might well despair, if the best man on earth had yet to repent in this sense. On the other hand, it is not hard to realize how the very perfection, comparatively, of his life and ways might hinder the apprehension of the evil in him, till he had measured himself fairly in the presence of God. This is his own account of it, as is evident. He had found in such light, deeper than his outward life, a self from which he turned in shame and loathing. Repentance was, in him, not *doing* in any shape, but turning from all that he had done and been, to cast himself upon mere mercy. And this mercy in God met him there and then with full deliverance and lifting up out of all his sorrows.

Thus, then, was the way of the Lord to be prepared into His Kingdom. As Isaiah states it—though the quotation is to be found in Luke, not here, the mountain was to be leveled, the valley filled, pride abased and lowliness exalted, grace in God realized as needed alike by all, sufficient for any. So would He have His way.

John preached, and his word was with power to break through the hollow crust of things and bring men to reality. This man with his strange garment and rough fare, was at all events real. Multitudes from all the country round about poured out to listen to him, and submitted to his baptism. The conditions of it were within easy reach: every convicted sinner had in this his title.

2. But we soon find the opposition of the heart to God revealing itself, even under apparent conformity to such humbling requirements, and John emphasizes therefore the division that would be made among men when the King should come. For now, among the multitude, whether merely to be in the fashion, or else moved by a power to which they would not wholly yield themselves, many Pharisees and Sadducees came to his baptism. They were the religious leaders of the people, though far enough apart from one another, types of the two directions in which men turn away from God. As the Pharisee was the legalist and formalist, so the Sadducee was the rationalist and semi-infidel of his day. Apart as they were from one another, they could yet show their essential oneness by the way in which they could combine against the followers of the Lord; and John treats them as one, essentially. "O brood of vipers," he exclaims, "who has shown you that ye should flee from the coming wrath?" He could not credit them with having felt the sting of such an incentive. They must prove, then, the reality of it—must bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. And here self-judgment would show itself first of all, in giving up the false and futile pretensions which they based upon their descent from Abraham, for all the promises to him God could fulfil to a seed raised up to him from what might be to them as it were from the very stones.

These pretensions were indeed enormous. "The common notion of the time," says Edersheim, was that "the vials of wrath were to be poured out

for I say unto you that God is able of these [v]stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And already is the [w]axe directed at the root of the trees: every tree, therefore, that bringeth not forth good fruit is cut

v *cf.* Is. 63. 16. *cf.* Gal. 3. 7-9. *cf.* Rom. 11. 17, 18.
w *cf.* ch. 5. 25. *cf.* Jas. 5. 9. *cf.* Lk. 19. 41-44; *cf.* 2 Pet. 3. 9, 10.

only on the Gentiles, while they, as Abraham's children, were sure of escape—in the words of the Talmud, that the 'night' (Isa. xxi. 12) was 'only to the nations of the world, but the morning to Israel.' For no principle was more fully established in the popular conviction, than that all Israel had part in the world to come, and this specifically because of their connection with Abraham. This appears not only from the New Testament, from Philo and Josephus, but from many Rabbinic passages. 'The merits of the fathers' is one of the commonest phrases in the mouths of the Rabbis. Abraham was represented as sitting at the gate of Gehenna, to deliver any Israelites who might have been otherwise consigned to its terrors. In fact, by their descent from Abraham, all the children of Israel were nobles, infinitely higher than any proselytes. 'What,' exclaims the Talmud, 'shall the born Israelite stand upon the earth, and the proselyte be in heaven?' In fact, the ships on the sea were preserved through the merit of Abraham; the rain descended on account of it. For his sake alone had Moses been allowed to ascend into heaven, and to receive the law; for his sake the sin of the golden calf had been forgiven; his righteousness had on many occasions been the support of Israel's cause; Daniel had been heard for the sake of Abraham; nay, his merit availed even for the wicked. In its extravagance the Midrash thus apostrophizes Abraham: 'If thy children were even (morally) dead bodies, without bloodvessels or bones, thy merits would avail for them.' "

So thoroughly had Israel missed the lesson which in Abraham himself God had kept constantly before their eyes, that he was a man justified by faith, and that the circumcision of which they boasted was, in fact but the sign of righteousness by faith (Rom. iv. 2–5, 11). Alas, natural birth, mere outward participation with the people of God, or ceremonial ingrafting among them,—it is possible for men even yet, and under a very different dispensation, to attribute to such things an extraordinary importance. For the Jew, it is plain that John's language assailed his most cherished hopes. It was possible, then, that all upon which he had built should fail him, and God could bring in, in his stead, those who had no natural claim, or birth-relationship at all! To us who enjoy, in fact, a place so given, this is simple; but for the Jew it would be an overwhelming thought. It did indeed show that the axe was being laid at the root of the trees. All depended upon the fruit that manifested the tree. If the fruit was bad, what matter though it should be of the finest stock?

The sinner, as such, wherever he was, was under the wrath of God. If once the limit of forbearance were reached, the tree cut down was destined for the fire. Very simple truth indeed; but no man loves it. Because he does not love it, he will invent every possible way of escape; or rather, hide from his own eyes that from which there is none. How terrible is the power of self-deceit in all of us; and how great need for the plainest possible speaking, where this is the case! For, thank God, there is a way of escape—not indeed from the need of repentance, but by its means. For repentance is only the backside of faith: he who turns his back on himself finds grace from the One to whom he turns,—who has thus become visible to him.

All John's aim therefore is to bring men to repentance. For this he baptizes "with water:" laying stress upon the "water," expressly to free them from the idea that there was anything in this, apart from the significance which it had as a baptism to repentance. Water is only water—can only produce a material effect, and not a spiritual. Nor does God ordain it to a magical use, perverting the nature of what He has created. On the contrary, He takes up what is in itself, and manifestly, nothing, in order that men should not lose sight

down and cast into the fire. *I* indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, [z]whose sandals I am not fit to bear: he shall baptize you with the [y]Holy Spirit and [z]fire.

[x] ver. 14. Mk. 1. 7, 8. Lk. 3. 16, 17. John 1. 15, 26, 27. John. 3. 28, 30.

[y] Acts 1. 4, 5 with Acts 2. 1–4, 16–20; *cf.* 1 Cor. 12. 13. [z] Mal. 4. 1; ch. 18. 8, 9; Lk. 16. 22–26.

of the spiritual meaning by what might seem to have some inherent virtues. Baptism, with John as with Paul, is simple burial of the dead, *not* life, not resurrection, but the contrary of this: the confession of need, of sin and death, that Another may be seen and known and trusted in.

He turns therefore now to speak of that Other and His baptism, and to put himself in the lowliest attitude at the feet of the One of whom he is but the herald, and unworthy even to bear His sandals—to perform the office of the meanest slave: a strong testimony from one to whom all the nation seemed looking at this time; but what John announces Him as to do speaks more strongly yet: for what must He be who baptizes with the Holy Spirit? No doubt, the Jews were far from having any proper intelligence with regard to the Holy Spirit; yet they knew it was a divine influence that was here spoken of. *We* ought to have clear knowledge; and yet of few things, perhaps, in Christianity has there been more misunderstanding than of the baptism of the Spirit. Indeed, the very thing with which John contrasts it here, the baptism of water, has been and is by many, nay, by the large number of professing Christians, confounded with it; and as a necessary consequence it has been degraded to mere unreality, subjected to man's will, made to inflate the pride of a pretentious ecclesiasticism, and to deceive the credulous victims of superstition to their ruin. While, on the other hand, many who have truer knowledge of spiritual things yet reduce the baptism of the Spirit to a temporary, oft-repeated influence, whose significance is in reverse proportion to its ready repetition.

It is evident that our Lord is but applying the words here, when He says to the disciples after His resurrection: "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence" (Acts i. 5). Here is the same contrast of water with Spirit, yet the same term, "baptism," applied to each; while the Spirit on the day of Pentecost when these words were fulfilled, did not connect itself with water, nor were those to whom they were spoken baptized with water at that time at all. It is certain, also, that these disciples were born again before Pentecost, and that this baptism, therefore, was not their new birth. Scripture, if we pay the least real heed to it, easily delivers us thus from such strange delusions.

On the other hand, clearly at Pentecost the Christian Church began, and this is the "Church which is Christ's body" (Eph. i. 22, 23); while, in exact agreement with this we are told (1 Cor. xii. 13), that "by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." Thus the baptism of the Spirit is not that by which men are new-born, but that by which those already new-born become members of the body of Christ. It is not the beginning of the Spirit's work in souls, but a further, and yet in an important sense an initial work.

It does not follow, however, from the way in which Christianity has fulfilled this prophecy of John, that he knew anything of the Church as the body of Christ. It is certain that this was a revelation of later date, and necessarily hidden from him (Eph. iii. 3–6). It is certain, because Scripture declares it (1 Pet. i. 10–12), that prophets might be led of the Spirit to utter what was quite beyond their own intelligence. But more than this, it does not follow, because Christianity has fulfilled this in a certain way, that there may not be another fulfilment of it, Israelitish and not Christian, in those days to which the Baptist seems to point on, when Israel will be God's threshing-floor and finally purged, according to the Lord's own prophecy at an after-time. There does not seem, at least, any reason why the outpouring of the Spirit upon Israel and the nations in millennial times, of which Joel and others plainly speak, should not be called a "baptism," as initiating for them that state of bless-

3 (iii. 13-17): The King anointed, and proclaimed from heaven.

Whose [a]fan is in his hand, and he shall thoroughly purge his threshing-floor, and shall gather his wheat into the [b]garner; but the chaff he will burn up with [c]unquenchable fire.

3. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John would have hin-

a *cf.* Mal. 3. 1-3. *cf.* chap. 25. 31-46.
b ch. 13. 29, 30, 39-43. ch. 8. 11. *cf.* Luke 16. 22. *cf.* Heb. 4. 9.
c Ps. 1. 4-6; *cf.* Mark 9. 43-48; *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 8, 9; *cf.* Rev. 20. 9-15.

ing which will then be theirs. Such double accomplishments of prophecy are by no means rare.

It agrees with this thought that John puts alongside of this baptism of the Spirit the baptism of fire; which finds its explanation in what directly follows: "He shall burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Many would point us rather to the "cloven tongues like as of fire," on the day of Pentecost,—a thought natural enough if Christianity were the complete fulfilment of what is here, and such an idea has become fully attached to the expression, a "baptism of fire." But the *tongues* of fire convey a different idea—that of a word that shall act upon others, while that of baptism is of something into which the subjects of it are themselves introduced. These things may have easy connection, but they are not the same. Moreover the going forth of the gospel among men of divers tongues does not seem at all in the line of the Baptist's message here, which is an exhortation to Israel in view of the coming Kingdom and their unpreparedness for it. There would be alternate consequences, according as they repented and received, or else rejected, the coming King: they would either be separated to God by the action of the Spirit of God, or separated to judgment, if they rejected Him.

He had just been speaking of the burning of the fruitless tree; he goes on now to speak of the coming of the King under the figure of one who winnows wheat in his threshing-floor. He fans away the chaff to get the wheat, which alone he values; and this is exactly what is necessary for the blessing of Israel, who are to be blessed upon earth. For this the wicked must be severed from among the just, as we find in one of the parables of the Kingdom afterwards (xiii. 49): the earth must be freed from the destroyers of it. The saints of the present time are, on the other hand, taken to heaven; and for their blessing no such judgment of the earth is needed.

We see that the Baptist goes on to a judgment which is even yet future, and says nothing about the present delay of it in the Lord's long-suffering. This is quite in the manner of Old Testament prophecy, as in that of Isaiah which the Saviour quoted and appealed to in the synagogue at Nazareth. There He quotes "the Spirit of the Lord is upon Me," and as far as "to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." There He stops, though the sentence goes on without a break to "the day of judgment of our God" (Luke iv. 19; Isa. lxi. 1, 2); just as in John's words also, in connection with the blessing and restoration of Israel, which in Isaiah are then described in glowing terms.

We find this as a principle all the way through the Old Testament. Christianity, with all belonging to it, is a "mystery hid in God,"—abundantly spoken of in types and figures throughout, but of course needing the light of the New Testament for its discovery. Even John is not given to see behind the veil, although being brought face to face with Christ, he is "much more than a prophet" of the Old Testament.

But John is not at his highest in any of the so-called "synoptic" gospels. It is John the Evangelist who records for us his fullest utterances. In Matthew the herald of the Kingdom has nearly completed his testimony, and is about to pass away. But before doing so he is privileged to baptize the One whose coming he anticipates and welcomes with such fullness of delight; and we are now to stand with him in the presence of the KING.

3. The third section gives us now therefore, in brief but all important words,

dered him, saying, I have [d]need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, [e]Suffer it now: for so it becometh us to fulfil all

[d] ver. 11. *cf.* ch. 11. 11.
[e] *cf.* ch. 17. 27. *cf.* Lk. 12. 50 with Lk. 24. 46.

the manifestation and anointing of the King, who is also, as we have seen, even in that character the Saviour. He now comes forth from His private into His public life, to take up the wondrous work for which He alone is competent. Although not historically so, yet in its significance here, the mission of the Baptist ends where Christ begins His public ministry.

"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him." There is definite purpose and meaning then, in this baptism; and yet, from what we have seen of its character as John proclaims it, it is the last thing that we should have imagined possible for the Lord, to be baptized of John. John himself thinks so: he is startled, even to refusing it: "but John forbad Him, saying, *I* have need to be baptized of *Thee*, and comest Thou to me?" In fact there has been the widest misunderstanding among Christians of this act ever since; and we need to look at it earnestly and reverently, in order (if it may be) to find the track where so many have gone astray. We shall not need, however, to discuss the conflicting views that have been taken. It will be more profitable to enquire directly for ourselves what Scripture may give us with regard to it. There is, it is true, no direct explanation; the Lord's words in reply to John, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness," require themselves to be set in the light of related facts, before, as it seems, we shall be able to apprehend them. Let us start with some of the plainest of these, and see what light they may throw upon the matter.

It is clear that this baptism of Christ by John lies at the entrance of His public ministry. Before this, with the exception of the notices of His birth, and the one incident of His youth which Luke recalls, the silence of the Gospels with regard to His life up to this time, when He is about thirty years of age, is absolute and profound. So strange has it seemed that this should be, that, as is well-known, the gap has been sought to be filled by apocryphal statements, in which miraculous deeds, as unlike the soberness of Scripture as possible, and as far removed from the character of the "signs" which bore testimony to His divine nature, fill the pages with transparent falsehood. They only have their use in showing us what our Gospels would have been, had they been left merely to human wisdom to provide for us. We have not really a scrap of this apocryphal work which is otherwise worth preserving. The denial of all this invention of the miraculous is found where the turning of water into wine at Cana of Galilee is stated to be the "*beginning* of miracles" which He did, and which showed forth His glory (Jno. ii. 11). And the silence of Scripture otherwise as to all these years of His life regarding which there were, of course, so many witnesses ready to utter all they knew, and so many eager, as we should be, to take it in—this silence can only be accounted for by a Hand controlling, and a divine design.

When He comes forth, it is to be proclaimed by John as "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world" (Jno. i. 29); and in such a view of Him we shall find the speech of this mysterious silence. The passover lamb was to be "taken" on the *tenth* day of the first month, and "kept up" until the fourteenth day before being sacrificed. Yet the whole year was changed evidently in view of this, which was in fact the primal deliverance upon which the after-deliverance from Egypt was really based. Why then these unnoticed ten days?

Notice, that we are in the midst of the typical shadows of the Old Testament; and, according to the symbolic language which these types speak throughout, the number *ten* is the number of responsibility, as derived from those ten commandments which are its perfect measure according to the law. The lamb was, as we know, to be without blemish —and this means as to the true Lamb a spir-

righteousness: then he suffered him. And Jesus, having been baptized, came up straightway out of the water; and behold, the [f] heavens were opened, and he

[f] Mk. 1. 10. Lk. 3. 21, 22. Jno. 1. 32-34. *cf.* Acts 7. 56.

itnal state. Putting these things together, it is plain that they have connected meaning, and that the ten days of silence, yet of responsibility, answer in fact to the thirty years of silence—a *three times* ten—in which He was living for Himself His individual life before the eye of God, after this to come forward and be approved of Him as "without blemish and without spot." In fact, He *is* then so approved, the Father's voice giving testimony publicly to Him as His beloved Son, in whom He is well pleased.

The typical "four days" of *public testing*—the meaning again given by the numeral—were still to come before the actual sacrifice should take place. He is immediately led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, for the express purpose of being "tempted by the devil." And His life afterwards, how different is it from that quiet life at Nazareth in which He had been so long in communion with His own thoughts and with God! This was the fulfilment of His own individual responsibility, having its divine necessity in order that He should be able to give Himself for others, yet on that very account private, and not public. Miracles, as we see at once, would have been quite out of place here. For Himself He never used them, as He had come down to the common lot of men, and was for Himself far beyond need of them. Only God could be the competent witness of such a life, and He it is who must give witness, as He does.

It is plain that if it is as the unblemished Lamb He is presenting Himself here, the Lord's baptism by John at once becomes unmistakable in its significance. In the Gospel of Mark He speaks of His baptism,* with evident reference to His sufferings (Mark x. 38). Christian baptism is also spoken of as "baptism unto death," and in it we are "baptized unto *His* death" (Rom. vi. 3, 4). With this John's baptism in *Jordan*—the river of death—is in full agreement. The words, "so it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness," receive also in this way their simplest interpretation. For those who were "confessing their sins" in such a manner, the first step in righteousness of which they were capable was to take openly their place in death, as that which was their due. This is alone the principle according to which He can unite the other recipients of John's baptism, so different as they were, with Himself: for, for Him also, who having no sins of His own, was yet there for the sins of others, the place of death which it prefigured was no less the requirement of righteousness: the blessed Substitute for sinners had of necessity to take the sinners' place.

Thus all is clear throughout, while as the King we have already seen that the Lord acts as the Representative of His people, who is to save His people from their sins. No Kingdom, such as prophecy had pointed out, apart from this. No possibility could there be of men being "His people," apart from it. Men are sinners, and a holy God cannot for a moment ignore this. When Israel came of old into relationship with Him, it could be only by the blood of the lamb: redemption could not be by power only, but (and first of all) by blood. He, therefore, who is to be King of God's Kingdom cannot without preliminary take the throne. He must suffer that He may be glorified: He must come to the throne by the way of the Cross.

And so, when the throne *is* taken, the effect of this and the character it manifests abide. "He shall be a priest upon his throne" (Zech. vi. 13). He still stands before God for the people over whom He reigns; and while He is the true Melchizedek, "king of righteousness," He is also the true King of Salem, "King of peace." In Him "righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Ps. lxxxv. 10). For His throne, like the mercy-seat of old, is blood-sprinkled;

* In the common version, also in the present one (Matt. xx. 22), but all editors agree that it is an interpolation.

saw the Spirit of God descending as a [g]dove, and coming upon him; and behold, a [h]Voice out of the heavens, saying, [i]This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

[g] *cf.* Gen. 8. 8-12. *cf.* Lev. 1. 14-17. *cf.* Is. 38. 14. *cf.* ch. 10. 16. *cf.* Song 5. 12; *cf.* Ps. 68. 13. [h] Jno. 12. 28; *ctr.* Ex. 19. 19; *ctr.* Ex. 20. 1, etc. [i] Mark 1. 11; Luke 9. 35; 2 Pet. 1. 17; *cf.* Is. 42. 1; *cf.* Heb. 2. 9.

and the cherubim of judgment gaze upon it from between their covering wings, and are at rest.

Here, therefore, the Lord enters not yet upon His Kingship. He is anointed, but not crowned. It is priesthood that must first act and prepare the way. Thus, rising up out of the water, the Spirit of God descends upon Him as a dove: He becomes not simply in title but in fact, the Christ, the "Anointed." As Aaron of old had by himself received the typical anointing without blood, in order to his exercising the priesthood, so is He now declared fit for and consecrated to His sacrificial work, Priest and Sacrifice as He is in one. His perfection is as needful to the one as to the other. The white linen garments of the day of atonement, and not the robes of glory and beauty, are those in which alone the sacrifice is offered that enters the sanctuary, and in which he enters it to sprinkle the blood before God. It is what He Himself was that prevailed, in the day of unequaled agony, when Aaron's Antitype offered up to God the only acceptable offering, and was accepted in that glorious "obedience unto death," by which "the many" for whom He stood "are constituted righteous" (Rom. v. 19).

What the Father's voice proclaimed the Spirit seals (Jno. vi. 27). He comes to rest where there is a heart—at last, a human heart—in perfect sympathy with His own, to give Him lodgment. Thus, appearing as a dove, He manifests exactly the character of Him upon whom He comes. The dove was one of the sacrificial birds—the symbol of Christ, therefore, in the very attitude in which we find Him here; and all is still in perfection and divine harmony. Father, Son, and Spirit are indeed for the first time openly manifested together in the work of redemption, while it is Christ, in the perfection of manhood reconstituted, and in Him brought nigh to God, to which Father and Spirit witness.

The dove, or pigeon,—and the two were almost one,—was in fact the only bird explicitly *named* for sacrifice. As the "bird of heaven" it has, undoubtedly, its first significance. Heaven itself provides the offering by which heaven is to be appeased and opened over man. "The Second Man is from heaven" (1 Cor. xv. 47). He who has sinned, as all mere men have, cannot by that fact provide the unblemished offering that will alone avail. It is God, therefore, who Himself provides it; and in this way manifests Himself in unspeakable goodness to win man's heart to Himself. This is the divine power of the gospel in reconciliation. He who requires has fulfilled the requirement. He who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity has yet devised the wondrous means whereby His banished should be restored to Him. Not only so, but for this restoration the bird of heaven shows us God become man—no temporary condescension, but eternal love made known for eternity, eternally to be enjoyed.

Christ is divine love come down, and the dove is the bird of love and sorrow united. The love explains the sorrow: the sorrow the depth of the love. What a world to welcome the Son of God! and what a welcome the world gave Him! "A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief! and we hid, as it were, our faces from Him: He was despised, and we esteemed Him not."

But Scripture is more definite than this as to the dove, for it points us to "its wings covered with silver, and its feathers with yellow gold." (Ps. lxviii. 13.) And here the reference will be plain to those that are acquainted with the symbolism. "Silver" gets its significance from the money of atonement, and its meaning is well illustrated in passages familiar to us. The *wings* are silver, for it is in redemption that the activity of divine love has been displayed; while in the feathers is the gleam of gold, the display of divine glory. This is how nature witnesses to Christ.

4 (iv.1-11): His proving in the wilderness.

4. [1] Then was Jesus [j] led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be [k] tempted of the devil; and when he had

[j] Mk. 1. 12, etc. Lk 4.1, etc. Luke 4. 14.

cf. Acts 8.39; *ctr.* Gen. 2.8. *k cf.* Ex. 12. 3-6; *cf.* Heb. 2.18; *cf.* Heb. 4. 15.

The Father proclaims the Son. The apostle tells us that "no man taketh this honor unto himself"—that of the high priesthood—"but He that was called of God, even as Aaron. So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made a High-priest, but He that said unto Him, "Thou art my Son" (Heb. v. 4, 5). This, then, was the Lord's induction into His office, as having the relationship which is acknowledged here. Yet it is not as the Only-begotten Son, or in His Deity that He is addressed; for, in that case, it could not be added, as in Hebrews, "*to-day* have I begotten Thee." Nor could His divine glory be the foundation of a priesthood which, of necessity, is human. It must be, therefore, as born into the world by the power of the Holy Ghost, as the angel says to Mary, "therefore that Holy Thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Here he is Son of God in His human nature,—Man, but a *unique* Man. And the connection of this with His priesthood is not hard to trace. True Man He is, without taint of the fall—the Son of God, as coming (like Adam, but another Adam) fresh from the inspiration of God. Thus He begins another creation, though out of the ruins of the old. In this way He is the Representative Head of a new race of men, standing for them before God, with God, the true Mediator-Priest of the new humanity.

No wonder that heaven opens to own and induct into His place this glorious Person! "Therefore doth my Father love Me," He says elsewhere, "because I lay down my life that I might take it again." And here, where He is, as it were, pledging Himself to that death for men, the Father's voice breaks out in all its fullness of joy in Him: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

Let us notice before we pass on, how in the meat-offering view of His Person the distinction between His birth of the Spirit and His anointing is kept before us. (*See notes on Lev. ii.*) In the first general view of Christ as given in it, the anointing of the Spirit is what is emphasized, because it is the seal set upon Him,—the Father's approbation. In the meat-offering baken in the oven (the sufferings from the mere fact of what the world was, without open persecution) both things are represented but apart; and here the "*wafers anointed* with oil" show fuller, readier exposure to it after His public coming forward. In that upon the pan (the open persecution) it is the Man born *and* anointed that brings forth the world's enmity. His public testimony fanning the necessary opposition to Him into flame.

In the meat-offering of the priest on the day of his anointing (Lev. vi. 19-23, *see notes*) we have, distinctly and necessarily, what He was as presented to God at the very time to which we have reached in the Gospel. Here, therefore, it is *prepared* with oil, but *not* anointed. And it *all* goes up to God as a sweet savor, man having no part in it. It is Christ in the period of His life which closes with His baptism, the years lived to God in retirement, of the sweet savor of which to God He Himself gives testimony.

4. The fourth section follows the third here, as the story of the wilderness in the book of Numbers follows the priestly anointing in the book of Leviticus. The Israelites had forty years of trial in the wilderness, and all through showed how little they had learned the lessons they were placed there to learn. The Lord is there forty days, and tested to the full, approving Himself ever perfect, and beyond the need of learning,—Master and not disciple.

He has fulfilled, as we have seen, in the thirty years of His private life at Nazareth, His own responsibility as Man before God. He has now come forth from that retirement to take His public place as Mediator for others. He has been accepted as perfectly pleasing to the Father, the unblemished Lamb of sacrifice, as well as the Priest, able to offer for the sins of men. To this office He is consecrated by the descent of the Spirit upon Him, and is now fully the Christ, the Anointed, openly declared to be this.

1 (1-4): the Obedient One—God's will alone His motive,

[l]fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterward hungered. And the tempter came to him and said: [m]If

[l] *cf.* Ex. 34. 28. *cf.* 1 Ki. 19. 8. [m] *cf.* Gen. 3. 1; *cf.* Ex. 17. 6; *cf.* ch. 26. 53, 54.

He is now to be tested as to His ability for the path upon which He has entered. The book of Job shows us Satan allowed of God for this purpose to be the sifter of God's wheat—the "accuser of the brethren." He who is to be the First-born among these pleads for Himself no exemption from this trial. He is expressly led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, *to* be tempted of the *devil:* designated thus according to the meaning of the term as "the false accuser."

But God has pronounced: is not that enough? Alas, with sin has come in distrust of God Himself: He also is upon trial; and Satan's reasoning in Job's case almost openly takes that ground. God pronounces as to Job, and he takes exception to it. "Hast Thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house?" he says; and that means to say, "This sentence is not given upon proper trial." And God in His very mercy to man, who to his undoing has accepted Satan's malignity as truth, does not retreat behind His privilege. If He is, and must be, sovereign in His doing, so that "none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" yet will He suffer question, and let all be brought into the fullest light. Job's hedge is taken away, and Satan is allowed large limits within which to deal with him,—the end being, of course, blessing to the sufferer and full vindication of God's perfect ways.

And here now is His own Beloved, and there is no remnant of a hedge about the person of the Christ of God; nor will He use the power that is in His hand against the adversary. In conflict between good and evil, power cannot decide: the good must manifest itself as that, and stand by its own virtue against all odds. The glorious Wrestler is stripped, therefore, for the wrestling. Son of God though He be, He comes into the poverty of the creature, the conditions of humanity, and these in their utmost straitness. Man in Adam in his original perfection had been tempted in a garden specially prepared and furnished for him. But one thing was denied him, and in the denial was contained a blessing, among the chief of all the blessings there. Real want there was none, and need was in such sort ministered to as to be itself, in every way, the occasion of new delight. The weakness of the creature was owned, but tenderly provided for, so as to witness to the tender arms of love that were about him: he had but to shrink into them to be in perfect safety, beyond all possible reach of harm.

But not so sheltered, not so provided for, is the new Adam, the Son of man. The garden is gone; in its stead is the wilderness; nor is there nurture for Him now from nature's barren breast. For forty days He fasts, and then with the hunger of that forty days upon Him, the tempter comes. It marks the contrast between Him and other men that, whereas a Moses or Elias fasted to meet God, *He* fasts to meet the devil.

There are three forms of the temptation: though, with the first broken we see that victory is gained over them all. Yet for our instruction it is that we are permitted to have all before us, that we may realise the points in which the subtlety perfected by ages of experience finds man to be above all accessible, and learn how Satan is to be resisted still. We shall do well to consider them closely, therefore, and with the closest application to ourselves. The battle-field here may seem to be a narrow one; the points of attack few; the weapons employed against the enemy a scanty armory: but here lies one of the excellences of Scripture, that its principles, while simple, have in them all the depths of divine wisdom, and far-reaching application to the most diverse needs.

[1] "And when the tempter came unto Him, he said, If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."

Satan would thus act upon Him by the conviction of what He was, and make Him assert Himself, in circumstances which were so unsuited to what He was. The Son of God, the Beloved of the Father, at the extreme point of starvation in a desert! But then this was surely in His own power to set right: He needed

thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. But he answered and said: It is [n] writ-

[n] vers. 7,10. Deut. 8. 3. ch. 6.25-34. *cf.* John 4. 31-34.

not circumstances to be adjusted to Him, who was able so easily to adjust them to Himself. The power surely was His, the need real, the hunger sinless: why, then, should He not put forth His power, and make the stones of the ground minister to His necessities? So simple and plausible is the suggestion, so well it seems to recognize the truth of what He was, so natural is it with us to minister with what power we have to our own requirements, that to any of us naturally, it might seem to be no evil suggestion at all,—no *temptation*. But it *was* such; and the Lord's answer will show us, better than any reasoning of our own, why it was such.

It has been noticed by all,—it could hardly escape notice,—that the Lord answers ever by the word of God. This is the sword of the Spirit, the only weapon we have with which to encounter the adversary; but it is striking, and speaks powerfully to us, to find the Lord who could surely have answered from His own mind, using always, and with distinct reference to it as such, the written Word. We see that He takes absolutely the same ground as ourselves, answers as man, is subject, as we are, to the authority of God. And this the passage which He quotes fully proves,—going, indeed, beyond it: "*It is written*, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

This is from Deuteronomy (viii. 3), the book that sums up the lessons of the wilderness, for those who had been through the wilderness. And the passage shows that the dealings of God with His people had been directly designed to teach them this: "And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know, that *He might make thee to know* that man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." How important,—how supremely important, therefore, is this principle!

Man lives by the word of God,—in obedience to it. The true life of man is nourished and sustained alone by this. Bread will not sustain it: the life of obedience is that which alone is life. In this way we see that though, because of inherent sin everywhere, the legal covenant had no life in it, yet there is another sense wherein "which, if a man do he shall even live in them" is to be understood. There is really a path of life, though grace alone can put us in it or maintain us there. Eternal life and disobedience are in fact opposites. The gospel does not alter this: grace fully affirms it: "Sin shall not have dominion over you, because ye are not under law, but under grace."

All this is in the passage quoted by the Lord; but in His application of it we are made to go further than naturally we should carry it. What principle of disobedience, we might ask, could be contained in the simple suggestion to use power that He really had, to minister to need that was as really His also, and in which, therefore, there could be no evil?

Notice, then, that it is as *man* He speaks: it is of man these things are written. Son of God He was—adoringly we own it; it is this that makes the path we are thinking of so wonderful an one; but it is not in the open glory of the Godhead that He is come to walk upon earth, but to learn obedience in humiliation,—nay, by the things that He *suffers*. He is come as man to work out redemption for men; and for this to learn all that is proper to man, apart from sin. Thus He cannot put forth divine power to save Himself out of this condition. What He can use freely for others, for Himself He cannot use. It is He of whom it is written in the volume of the book, "Lo, I come to do Thy will O God . . . I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart." Thus He is here simply subject, and subject in satisfaction and delight, to the will of Another. He has, for His whole course on earth, no other motive. Need may press, appetite may crave: He feels this as other men; did He not feel it, the

ten, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every °word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

° Job 33. 12. Jer. 15. 16. *cf.* Heb. 10. 7, 8.

glory of His humiliation would be dimmed. But while He feels it, it is no *motive* to Him: there is but one motive—the will of God. To make Himself a motive would destroy that perfection; come to do *that* will, and nothing else.

This is the spirit in which He goes forth to service: the close of it on earth, closing with the deepest humiliation and dreadest shadow of all, affords so beautiful an example of this principle, (even while at first sight it might seem at conflict with it), that one cannot forbear to speak of it here. One of the physical distresses of the agony of the cross is the great thirst produced by it. Almost the last words of the Lord there had reference to this, and gave it expression. His words, "I thirst" are answered by the sponge filled with vinegar, of which He tasted: and they were such as naturally to call forth such an answer. Was this, then, really any seeking of relief in His extremity, even from the hands that had nailed Him there? No: we are carefully guarded from such a thought. There was one Scripture, we are told, that remained to be fulfilled; and of this it was, in all the agony of that hour, that He was thinking: "Jesus, that the *Scripture might be fulfilled*, saith, I thirst." This leads to what had been predicted: "in my thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink." Thus the glorious obedience shines here without a cloud upon it, nay, in surpassing lustre. "Lo, I come to do Thy will" is the principle of His life.

But here we are made to realize the wondrous privilege that is ours,—the solemn responsibility that lies upon us. For *we* are "sanctified unto the obedience of Christ," and "He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps" (1 Pet. i. 2; ii. 21). This principle of His life must be, then, the principle of our lives. If with Him the governing motive was to do the will of God,—if He rejected every motive that could be urged from His own necessities —how simple is it that, for us also, the will of God must be our motive for action; apart from this there is no right motive possible.

What a world then, is this, in which the mass of men around us have no thought of God, no knowledge of His will, no desire to know it,—men with whom life is little else than the instinctive animal life; *disturbed*, more or less, by conscience, that is, by the apprehension of God! And as to Christians themselves, how easily are they persuaded, that, with certain exceptions at important crises of their lives, the simple rule of right and wrong—often determined by custom of some kind, rather than the word of God—is sufficient to indicate for them the will of God; their *own* wills being thus left free within a variously limited area!

The law in fact drew such a circle round man, and in mercy, as a sheepfold is the limit for the sheep. A class of actions is defined as evil, and forbidden; within these limits one may please oneself. Nor could law do other than this: for it the rigidity of a fixed code is necessary. But Christ came into the sheepfold to make His sheep hear His voice, and to lead them out: free, but where freedom would be safe as well as blessed, following the living guidance of the Shepherd Himself (John x). The rule is at the same time stricter and freer. And the reality transcends the figure, even as the Good Shepherd Himself transcends every other shepherd. To a love like His, united to a wisdom absolutely perfect, no detail of our lives can be unimportant, as (in the connection of these throughout, and of one life with another, none can be insignificant. Could it be imagined that any were so, yet which of us is competent to discern this, in any instance? "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth" is but the utterance of the common experience. Who, then, that has learned to distrust himself at all, but must welcome deliverance from such an uncertainty, and find it joy to be guided at all times by a higher wisdom?

Nothing makes this appear severe, nothing difficult, except the love of our own way, and the unbelief which, having given up confidence in God, first sent man out from the bountiful garden, to toil and strive for himself in the world

2 (5-7): and whose faith in God's word will

[2]Then the devil taketh him into the [p]holy city, and setteth him on the pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him: If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself

p Is. 48. 2. cf. Is. 52. 1. cf. ch. 27. 53.

outside. But the divine love which has purchased us here, and given us Bethlehem for our "house of bread," should suffice to heal that insane suspicion, and close up the fountain of self-will within us. "He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not, with Him also, freely gives us all things?" The path ordained for us has, no doubt, its roughness, and the cloud hangs over it; but He makes the cloud His tabernacle, and just in the very night it brightens into manifest glory. All differences are in the interests of the journey itself, as was said of Israel, that they might "go by day and by night." The record of experience adds to this the assurance, "they go from strength to strength."

No wonder! if "by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God doth man live." What a sustenance of the true life within us to be thus, day by day, receiving the messages of His will, guided by that wondrous Voice, learning continually more the tenderness of His love for us: "He wakeneth morning by morning; He wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learner" (Isa. l. 4). This is the utterance prophetically of the Lord Himself: how blessed to be able to make it our own, and thus to have the fulfilment of those words: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way in which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."

So then the first temptation is met and conquered; and with this, in fact, is conquered every after-one; for he who, walking with God, waits upon God, what shall ensnare him? what enemy shall prevail against him? It is plain that Satan has been hinting again here the lie with which of old he seduced the woman. And that, as in her case "the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye and the pride of life" came in through the door so opened, they were now effectually shut out. Satan might repeat and vary his efforts; but to one cleaving fast to God, God will be a shield against which every shaft shall be broken to pieces. How great, then, the importance for us of such a lesson!

[2] But if we are to listen for the word of God, and our lives are to be shaped by it, we are called next to guard against the misuse of the Word itself. This is Satan's next attempt: "Then the devil taketh Him into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down: for *it is written*, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee; and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest haply Thou dash Thy foot against a stone."

How careful should we be as to quotations from Scripture! how little in fact we often are! Scripture twisted but a little awry, the authority of God is put upon a lie, and our very faith in it may betray us to the enemy.

How important, too, in this view of it, becomes the complete verbal inspiration of Scripture. If only the thought meant to be conveyed is guaranteed to us, but the wording left to the choice of imperfect wisdom, then (unless words mean nothing) we can never settle what the thought precisely is. If the words are possibly faulty, who can assure me of the exact truth hid under this faulty expression?

Satan does but leave out two or three words of the original: "to keep Thee *in all Thy ways*" (Ps. xci. 11, 12); but those words guard them against the abuse that he would make of them. The "ways" of Him who in the same psalm says of Jehovah, "In Him will I trust" will be God's ways, and He will wait upon God for the fulfilment of His word, and not impatiently grasp at it before the time. This is evidently Satan's effort now; and since the Lord will not move without the word of God, here is now the word to lead Him in that path of the miraculous which He has just refused. The psalm surely refers to Messiah: would it not be simply becoming confidence in God, boldly to claim and act on it?

not move out of the way of humiliation.

down: for it is [q]written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him: It is written again, [r]Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

3 (8-11): God His whole portion and praise.

[3] Again the devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and [s]showeth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. And he said unto him,

q Ps. 91. 11, 12. *cf.* 2 Cor. 11. 14. *cf.* 2 Cor. 2. 17. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 2.
r Deut. 6. 16. *cf.* 1 Sam. 4. 3–11. Ps. 95. 8–10.
s *cf.* Lk. 4. 6. *cf.* ch. 12. 29. *cf.* Jno. 14. 30; *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 4.

The place was favorable for such a venture. The miracle would be right before the eyes of the many worshipers—of a people always seeking after signs, and who, having shown themselves ready to go after impostors, would be brought now to the feet of the true Messiah. The word could not fail: was it not for Him to answer the desire of the people, stop with the right hand of power the confusion and misrule, and fulfil the glowing pictures which the prophets had drawn, and take the Kingdom already proclaimed to be at hand by one whose call of God he had Himself acknowledged?

This seems to be the line and power of the temptation here. It appeals to Jesus as the Messiah, as the former one had done to Him as Man. It takes advantage of the Lord's answer given to that, and would with devilish cunning turn that victory into a defeat. How would He refuse to take His predestined place, when the word of God itself beckoned Him into it?

But the "ways" of the blessed "Author and Finisher of faith" lie elsewhere than in this direction. Of these Satan has not dared to remind Him. He has come into the wilderness from Jordan, from the place of death, to which He had freely stooped as what "righteousness" required from the Representative of His people, and has been consecrated as the Priest to offer the needed sacrifice. Power could be found for men only in the path of humiliation, and out of this He could not raise Himself, nor put forth a hand to lay hold of that which must come to Him from God alone, vindicated and glorified. He would not be slow to put forth power, when this was accomplished, and in this alone all blessing lay. He that believed could not anticipate this: we see that it is the Lord's first answer which has essentially answered all, and which reveals the secret of victory over all temptation. He has come to do the will of God and not His own. In Him patience will have its perfect work, and thus He will be perfect and entire, living by His word, suffering only, putting forth no hand in His own behalf. Anything else would really be to "tempt God,"—to question as they questioned at Massah (Deut. vi. 16), where in their need He seemed not to come forward. They "tempted," tried Him by His providences, found Him to come short. This question still connects in this way with the first temptation; but Israel had no power in themselves to fall back upon as He had: would He use it? Nay, when God had pledged Himself to Him in His word, would He not put it to the proof, let it be seen openly that God was with Him? Nay, He will not; nor take the short road, as if God's way were too long.

This is to tempt Him then: to try Him by our thoughts,—alas, by our impatience, that cannot wait for His due time, nor take the path of humiliation He prescribes; that will in self-will reach out its hand and take, as Christ would not. He to whom all power belonged moved on as if in weakness, leaving it for God to vindicate and appear for Him, as and where and when He would.

[3] In the third temptation Satan shifts his ground completely. He is seeking the same thing of course; and shows himself more openly than he has done before; but he could not say, "If Thou be the Son of God, fall down and worship me!" He suddenly seems to realize so the truth of His humanity, that he will adventure fully upon it. If this be indeed One who is Son of man, shut off as it were from the claims and conditions of Deity;—if He has come in, in the very weakness of manhood itself to work the work committed to Him, then

All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and [t]worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, [u]Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, [v]Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, [w]angels came and ministered unto him.

[t] *cf.* 1 Cor. 10. 20. *cf.* Rev. 9. 20. *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 18-20. [u] *ctr.* Gen. 3. 6, 7. *cf.* Jas. 4. 7. [v] Deut. 6. 13. Deut. 10. 20.

Ex. 20. 3-5; *cf.* Is. 44. 6-8. [w] Lk. 22. 43; *cf.* John 20. 12, 13.

he will boldly test Him as mere man. All the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, can they have no attraction for this poor Nazarene? It is a desperate game indeed, and to us cannot but seem like the mere raving of insanity to propose to Christ to do homage to *him* for their possession! But, however it may seem to be no longer temptation, but a mere awful insult to the divine glory veiled in humanity before him, it does not seem to be given us as this. The Lord answers it, as He does the rest, from Scripture, though with an indignation which He has not shown before. Satan has disclosed himself, and can be called by his name and bidden to be off. Yet the whole reads as if he had as much confidence in this attack as in the other. The change of address, no longer "If Thou be the Son of God," with the boldness of his proposition, seems to say that he has now discovered and accepts the fact that his conflict is with One who, whatever He may be more than this, had indeed come to meet him as man only. And man—what had he not proved as to *him?* From Adam in the beauty of his Maker's handiwork, through the many generations since—he had not encountered yet a *second* man.

And he, the prince of this world, had he not wrested from man the sovereignty of earth, the inheritance for which God had destined him, God not interfering? might it not seem to him as if evil were stronger than good, as he realized the 4,000 years of his triumph, the generations of men that had conspired to lift him to his throne,—surely, an easy thing to do him homage!

In result, he has disclosed himself and is defeated. He has met, at last, the second Man. It is truly so: there is no display of deity, no outburst of divine judgment or of power; he is answered, still and always by the Word; its sufficiency as a divine weapon is seen all through: how great an encouragement for us in the irrepressible conflict which we all have to maintain. Through all He is the perfect example of faith, the Man Christ Jesus. We hear throughout the One who in the 16th psalm declares as the principle of His life: "the Lord is the measure of my portion and of my cup: . . . I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved."

The devil leaves Him now; and angels come and minister to Him.

SUBD. 2.

The manifestation of the Lord's fitness for His work is now complete. From opposite sides He is declared, what even the demons henceforth own Him to be, the Holy One of God. He can now go forth to His appointed work; and we have here a brief notice of His preaching, after the close of John's public testimony. What we have in this place is not yet any detail, but the fact of the announcement of the Kingdom by the King Himself, the place of its announcement, the association with Himself of others to carry on the work; and the signs which accompany it. Each of these things has its importance, and Matthew groups his facts for the purpose of giving a history of the testimony now given to Israel, in its fullness and sufficiency, though rejected by them, the testimony of John being already rejected when that of Christ begins.

1. We have first the place of its proclamation, Galilee being in general in this Gospel the sphere of the Lord's labors, from Capernaum as a centre, which was now indeed, according to its name, the "village of consolation," as the place of His residence and the scene of many of His mighty works. That it was chosen in divine wisdom to be this, one cannot doubt, and the prophet Isaiah had

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chap. iv. 12–25.)

The King's own Testimony.

1 (12-16): Light.

1. NOW when Jesus heard that John was [z]delivered up, he withdrew into Galilee. And leaving Nazareth he came and dwelt at [y]Capernaum which is by the sea-shore, in the borders of Zebulon and Naphtali: that it might be [z]fulfilled which was spoken through Esaias the prophet, saying: "The land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the [a]nations: the people who sat in [b]darkness saw a great light, and to those who sat in the region and shadow of death, to them hath [c]light sprung up."

2 (17-22): His testimony and disciples.

2. From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, [d]Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two [e]brethren, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, [f]Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they immediately [g]left the nets and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw [h]other two brethren, James the [son] of Zebedee and John his brother in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the boat and their [i]father, and followed him.

x Mk. 1. 14. Lk. 4. 14.
y Mk. 1. 21. Luke 4. 31. *cf.* ch. 9. 1. *cf.* ch. 11. 20, 23.
z *cf.* ch. 1. 22, etc. Is. 9. 1, 2. Josh. 19. 32, 34.
a *cf.* John 7. 52.
b Is. 42. 6, 7. *cf.* John 1. 5.
c *cf.* Mal. 4. 2. *cf.* Jno. 8. 12.
d ch. 3. 2.
e Mk. 1. 16-18. *cf.* Lk. 5. 1-11. *cf.* John 1. 40-42.
f *cf.* Acts 4. 11-13 with John 14. 12.
g ch. 19. 27-30. *cf.* Lk. 9. 57-62. *cf.* Phil. 3. 7, 8.
h Mk. 1. 19, 20.
i *cf.* Lk. 18. 29, 30.

marked it out in this way long before, as Matthew reminds us. Galilee, as "the land of Zebulon and Naphtali" on the one hand, and now "Galilee of the Gentiles" on the other, spoke plainly of the ruin into which the people of God had sunk. Zebulon, the dweller in relationship, as he should have been, had long fulfilled Jacob's prophecy, and "dwelling at the haven of the sea" had become the type of Israel as a whole, giving up its "dwelling alone" to mingle in adulterous commerce with the nations. Now it was but "the way of the sea," as if swallowed up in its waters; while Naphtali, the struggler, sat, struggling no more, in darkness which was indeed the "shadow of death." But the Saviour of sinners is not hindered thus, and there in the darkness was the very place for light to spring up. And now there had come to Zebulon a Dweller, in whom God Himself could dwell with man, and to Naphtali more than a struggler, a glorious *Conqueror*, the woman's Seed.

Here in outcast Galilee, the light could shine more freely than in Jerusalem, with its legal pretension and its hollowness at heart. Light, its own immediate evidence for all that have eyes to see! The Personal Word, the "Brightness of the Father's glory" before men's eyes! Earth had never before a revelation such as this.

2. The Lord takes up John's word as to the coming Kingdom. The full truth, when it comes, unites in itself all preceding partial utterances. Along with this comes the call of disciples: and Peter and Andrew, James and John, answer His call to be fishers of men, with prompt obedience. It is an obvious and common remark that the Lord chooses neither men of position, wealth, or learning. The qualifications He requires are first of all spiritual, and He who sends them out means to be with them in their work. Nay, the first of all qualifications is to be dependent upon Himself. But He calls,—calls now, as ever He did; and has given over to none His claim to do this. He is Lord and Master and Guide in all His people's service.

3 (23-25): The signs accompanying.

3. And Jesus [j] went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and [k] healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people. And the [l] report of him went

[j] ch. 9. 35. Mk. 1. 39. Lk. 4.15,44.
[k] Acts 10.38.
[l] ch. 9. 31. Mk.7.36,37. Lk. 4. 37.

That His call requires prompt, unhesitating obedience, He emphasizes Himself elsewhere. How great a thing is promptness, when once we are assured of the Lord's will. There is then nothing else to be considered, while moral hesitancy may so cloud this assurance as to make obedience then impracticable. Not alone in this, with how many would the present darkness of their way be clearly intelligible, if they would face honestly their past history. And that history must, after all, be faced one day.

3. The gospel preached by our Lord had "signs" accompanying it. This is one of the common Scripture words (though not used in this place,) for what we call "miracles." Such a word is used in Scripture also, but it emphasizes the "wonder" element only, and is of infrequent occurrence in the gospels. Important was even the power to produce wonder, as a bell to gather an audience, but the words chosen rather for these divine works speak of that in them which was to make its impress on the conscience and the heart. As "signs" they evidenced themselves as "powers"—acts of power—which in their character revealed God. The Kingdom of heaven which the Old Testament prepared men to expect was, in fact, an interference of divine power on behalf of men which would free the earth from the burdens sin had imposed and the curse brought in by it. Miracles, therefore, formed an essential part in the "Kingdom and glory," and are thus called by the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews "the powers of the world to come" (vi. 5). Most suitably, therefore, did they accompany the message that the Kingdom of heaven was at hand.

Yet John, its proclaimer, had done no miracle. His simple call to repentance required none. He saw and announced the Kingdom, but was not to introduce it. He embodied the spirit and emphasized the testimony of the old dispensation, which itself pointed beyond itself for the completion which would of necessity set it aside. He was the judicial summing up of the past, but in near view of the predicted future; and men needed only to have conscience called into activity to confirm to them the truth of what he said. They needed not and were not called to have faith in John, but to judge their own condition, and thus be ready for the coming King.

But now here *was* the King,—the One to whom the world was to be subject, the whole realm of nature submissive to His hand. Here miracles were the *natural* sign, then, of His Presence; to Him what man would call *supernatural* was *natural:* not to have manifested it would have discredited His claim. True and needful testimony it was to Him, when "all manner of disease and all manner of infirmity" yielded to His power, showing Him thus to be Master of the whole condition of things into which He had come. All the consequences of sin had found their remedy: to earth the long-lost paradise might be restored. Sin itself, therefore, as presently was to be proclaimed and certified, had found in Him its conqueror also. And, not passively content with receiving all who came, this grace in Him went forth with ceaseless activity to find its objects. God's heart was pouring itself out in such a way as if to preclude all possibility of resistance. Who could refuse such ministry to need so manifest, in which man's very flesh cried out for the living God: and how could then, his heart be silent?

In fact great multitudes flocked after Him from all the country round: from Galilee itself; from Decapolis, Rome's ten colonial cities; from Jerusalem also, valuing itself for privileges which, *mis*used, were bringing ruin upon all connected with it. Could, then, these various grades of a common humanity, one in the sad inheritance of the fall, which yet had so strangely divided them, find now in one Saviour-King their restorer to one another and to

out into all Syria; and they [m] brought unto him all that were sick, holden with various diseases and torments, demoniacs and lunatics and paralytics, and he healed them. And there followed him great [n] multitudes from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and [from] beyond the Jordan.

[m] Mk. 1.32, 33. Lk. 4. 40.

[n] ch. 5. 1. Mk. 3. 7, 8. ch. 8. 1, 18.

themselves? So it surely seemed as if it would be. "He made and baptized more disciples than John" was said of Him in the early days of His ministry. "The world is gone after Him," said His enemies at a later time. But history has been slow in fulfiling such a promise. Prophecy, on the other hand, has declared that so it shall be, though under different conditions from the present. And this is the one hope for the world which, in the beggary of all other hopes, shall at last find fulfilment.

SUBD. 3.

We shall be called back to these thronging multitudes again, to learn in detail their various needs and the way in which God had provided for them. But first the inspired history bids us listen to the Lord's own statement of what His Kingdom is; not in the form it should take, but in its inner spirit. The Old Testament prophets had already announced the form it would, and will yet, assume, when the "promises" still belonging to Paul's "kindred according to the flesh" (Rom. ix. 3, 4) shall be fulfilled. Introduced by a coming in glory which every eye shall see, the Kingdom of that day will be established in power that shall smite down all opposition as with a rod of iron (Ps. ii. 9). The law will then go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord once more from Jerusalem, then to be the place of His special manifestation upon the earth, men coming up from all parts of it to worship Him (Isa. ii.; Mic. iv.; Zech. xiv. 5–21).

The whole picture is, in many of its features, so unlike that into which Christianity has introduced us,—is, in fact, such apparent retrogression when seen as coming after this, that many find it impossible to understand it except as a figure; but as such no one will find it possible to understand it really. It is not Christianity certainly; it is not the heaven in which our portion is; it is a future —and still not final—state of the earth. It is a last dispensation before the eternal state begins,—a dispensation of sight, rather than of faith; and yet in many ways lower in character than that which faith now enjoys. "Blessed" in a higher sense, truly, "are they that have *not* seen, and yet have believed." Yet, in perfect accordance with this, the glory is then manifest and visible, as now it is not. And once more, and beyond all in the past, Jerusalem will be the candlestick for the light, where all may see it. Granting the apostle's interpretation to be the true one, and that to "Israel in the *flesh*" the promises belong,—and the prophets themselves unmistakably show this,—no other reading of Scripture is possible at all than the simple and literal one.

When John the Baptist proclaimed the Kingdom as at hand, he had before him no vision of Christianity, but just what the prophets of old had announced. And when the Lord takes up, with more emphasis and fuller demonstration, the Baptist's message, He is still speaking of the same thing. But Israel rejected Him through whom alone those promises could be fulfilled to them: "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." Thus, as Daniel had predicted, "Messiah" was "cut off, and had nothing" (ix. 26, *margin*). As far as Israel's blessing was concerned, the fair vision vanished. The world too, and not Israel merely, understood not the day of its visitation: "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." Thus the predicted blessing of the earth also is delayed, and only after nineteen centuries are the streaks of dawn beginning to be seen on the horizon.

Yet the Kingdom has come: the Baptist was not mistaken; the signs given could not deceive. Yes, it has come, and more than that which it promised has been brought in for faith. Yet it has come in a different way. Grace repelled will

SUBDIVISION 3. (Chap. v.–vii.)

The Kingdom in its Inner Spirit and Holiness.

1 (v. 1–16): The principles of the kingdom as shown in those who enter it.

1. [1] AND seeing the multitudes, he [o]went up into the mountain; and when he had sat down, his disciples came unto him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying,

[o] *cf.* ch. 17. 1. *cf.* ch. 8. 1.

still triumph over hindrances; its flood will rise but higher to overtop the barriers which would hem it in. And out of the world which has taken Satan for its prince, and rejected and crucified the Son of God, God has been all this time taking out for Himself a heavenly people—a people to share with Christ rejection upon the earth, yet to share with Him also His reign over it, and to have with Himself a place of nearer, dearer intimacy than even this might imply—"members of His body," partners soon of His throne, where He is, for eternity to be with Him.

These things we shall find the Lord beginning to unfold to His disciples, as soon as it is clearly seen that Israel will have none of Him; and here, where He speaks of "things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world" (xiii. 35), we shall have no difficulty in finding that which is our own—a fullness of blessing that Israel's portion does indeed figure, but only figure. This—the nation's as such—is earthly: ours is heavenly. There is to be a "new earth" also "wherein dwelleth righteousness," and with which Israel's seed and name are permanently connected (Isa. lxvi. 22), as on the other hand, a "heavenly city" for God's pilgrims of to-day.

In the "sermon on the mount" we have, then, the principles of the Kingdom of heaven, with very plain reference to the millennial earth. It is the *earth* that the meek are to inherit, though there is a "reward in heaven" also, at which we shall have to look in its place (vers. 5, 12). The first statement is from the 37th psalm, the application of which will be perfectly evident to all who consider it. Jerusalem also is spoken of, not in its desolate, disowned condition, but as "the city of the great King" (ver. 35), and we shall see further indications of this nature, as we take up the study of what is before us here.

Yet let it not be thought that this takes from us the application to ourselves, which Christians seek in it. The fuller revelation only completes the partial one; the higher blessing but transcends the lower. Through all dispensations God is the same God; and we are "blessed with *all* spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Of many things we can only argue, indeed, a more perfect—or at least a *fuller* application to ourselves than to them. To take from Israel what is hers is only to diminish her and not enrich ourselves; nay, what has been called in this way the spiritualizing of the promises has led most surely and emphatically to the *carnalizing* of the Church.

1. The "sermon on the mount" is the manifestation, then, of the Kingdom in its inner spirit and holiness,—still, of course, as a Kingdom to come, and not actually come. There are seven parts (the number of perfection); and the first (vers. 1–16) fittingly consists of "beatitudes," blessings pronounced by the King Himself upon the heirs thereof: first, in view of their personal character (1–9); then as sufferers in the midst of a world hostile to them (10–12); lastly, in face of that hostility, they are set in it as ministers of a blessing to be fully realized, when the long expected Kingdom at last is come (13–16).

The old covenant also had its blessings, but which, conditioned upon legal obedience, proved only the hopelessness of blessing under it; so that the very "song" of the lawgiver is a witness against the people, and his blessing of the tribes has to look for its fulfilment in times beyond the law; in fact, in the very times of the Kingdom which the Lord here announces. How suited that the Minister of the *new* covenant should begin with blessing—blessing still upon obedience (for in the nature of things there can be no other) but now with a

l (1-9): their right-eousness.

p Blessed are the q poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

p Ps. 1. 1. Ps. 32. 1. Ps. 119. 1.

Luke 6. 20, etc. q Prov. 29. 23; Is. 57. 15; *cf.* ch. 15.26-28.

positiveness and assurance which imply the grace which that coveuant, with its glorious "I wills," so royally expresses. (Heb. viii. 8–12.) For those under it there is no Mount Ebal, no curse or woe at all. The sweet authority of divine love constrains and restrains together. Christ is King of a Kingdom like which there is no other, where the "ingrafted word" is law, but a "law of liberty," and every individual conscience is His throne.

[l] There are seven blessings pronounced on character, and (as in most sevens elsewhere throughout the Word) the first four are distinguished from the last three by being connected with what is more negative and external—related here to position in the world; while the last three give us more specific divine lineaments which are found in all the children of God, as partakers of the divine nature. The first four show us the heart set upon a blessing which is not yet come,—upon the Kingdom of heaven itself: governed, therefore, by the unseen, and finding itself in the midst of all that is its moral opposite in the world around. It is an empty, barren scene, and the soul is conscious of poverty and distress and moral failure only in the midst of it. The last three give us the positive energy and activity of good amid the unceasing conflict of evil with it.* But we must look at them more particularly in their order and connection with one another, all which has its importance spiritually and for us.

First, and therefore of first importance here we have "Blessed are the poor *in spirit.*" This is in contrast with mere external poverty, and yet like it in its own sphere. When the heart is set upon things to come, present things of necessity lose proportionately their value. There is "absence of mind," as we call it,—the heart on the unseen. And this is characteristic of faith ever, which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things unseen." Yet this poverty of spirit is only the negative side of faith, the emptying and not the filling. Still there is power in it, as deliverance from a world in which men are walking in a vain show, and disquiet themselves in vain. The soul's bonds are cut: it can move, it can make progress. To such an one God's word becomes a necessity, as the one link with the invisible. And such a seeking has its welcome and assurance from the Lord Himself:—"theirs is the Kingdom of heaven."

How much *more*, not *less* forceful for us should this be, than for those to whom the Lord is directly speaking, or even for the people who will stand upon the threshold of the Kingdom in days soon to come. True, the earth's crisis will be upon it, and Israel's travail-time of intense anguish, out of which, as in a day, a nation will be born to God. But *we* have the revelation of a brighter inheritance, higher as heaven is above the earth, the meeting-place of the redeemed of the present and the past, the dwelling-place of God and the Lamb. Had we divine affections proportionate to the revelation made to us how little would mere circumstances here have power over the formation of a character like this! Granting that Satan's tactics for us have changed, and that, instead of funeral pyres for martyrs, there are now only premiums in abundance for unfaithfulness to Christ—a condition of things formed by compromise between the Church and the world,—should this have power to dim the eyes of faith?

*I give the meaning of these numerically here, it being difficult to do this with sufficient conciseness and intelligibility in the margin as usual.
(*a*) the Kingdom itself controlling, though unseen:—
(i) the barrenness of things here;
(ii) mourning is here love's judgment of the ruin.
(iii) meekness, the fruit of realizing one's possessions assured by God.
(iv) the complete failure of the world's system felt.
(*b*) the more positive Christ-like features:—
(i) mercy, only righteousness with such as we are; (*see notes*).
(ii) purity (separation from evil);
(iii) peace-making,—recovering energy.

Blessed are they that [r]mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the [s]meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*

*Or "land."

[r] Ps. 147. 3. Lk. 4. 18. *cf.* Lk. 7. 37, 38, 44-47.

[s] Ps. 37. 11. *cf.* ch. 11. 29 with Is. 53. 7, 12.

What would it be to say this, but to own it right and reasonable that Satan should gain his object?

Christ in the world at least must be poor in it. It was the place, without any question, of His poverty. If then, He be the example for us, how much does this imply? If He, too, gone out of the world, be the object for our hearts, where will our hearts be?

The second blessing is that of those who mourn; and here I do not think that it is a question of personal sin. Christ was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," and necessarily, as the Son of God in a world astray from Him. "For the zeal of Thy house hath eaten Me up," He says, "and the reproaches of them that reproached Thee are fallen upon Me" (Ps. lxix. 9). His tears fell over Jerusalem. The Cross He bore for men was fullest witness to the intensity of His anguish upon their account, while justifying the holiness of God in all He suffered for them. The mourning that He blesses here is, we may be sure, like His own, love's judgment of the ruin that is everywhere around: little need to dwell upon the causes for mourning in the world, such as we know it. Its open sores are revealed enough day by day, in a time when the most hidden things are revealed as a matter of course before the public gaze, as having unquestioned right to know everything. And yet, after all, the mass of evil is too great even to be so gauged and realized. What must have been the opposition of it to Him whose eye saw through it all, and whose heart had none of the callousness with which we can throw off, or the weakness which makes us faint under, so great a burden.

But "they shall be comforted." There is a rest of God to come, a rest into which we shall enter; a sabbath-rest, where rest shall not only be allowed but sanctified. How sweet the thought of a rest of God, where *He* shall rest—rest, as alone He can do, "in His love." And this shall be.

Approached from this direction, the next point is soon reached, the character of the meek. Amid the lusts and strife of earth, if like others you have your portion to seek, you must strive as they do. If you have nothing here to live for but God's will, you can afford to be quiet. Be sure for yourself of a Father's love and care always over you,—infinite love and wisdom concerning itself with all your path, and such realization will of necessity subdue all rashness of self-assertion, and make you careful only to give God His way, to cease from the folly of your own. Here too the Lord leads His people, "Learn of Me," He says, "for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." There is the present blessing of it, and how great it is!—"rest to your souls:" rest from all restlessness; quiet in the knowledge that God is God; what an inestimable joy is this!

When the "meek shall inherit the earth" will be, of course, still the time of the Kingdom to which we are here continually looking forward. It will be a wonderful thing in this world, whose history has been one long strife of ambition, and whose heroes have been so often made such by the hecatombs of the slain, to have the inheritance at last belong to the meek! The promise for an earthly people as it is, we shall still enjoy it, and in a better way. "Heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ," we shall reign with Him over the earth. We have no need, therefore, to covet Israel's promises, and should not be enriched by them in the least. Here the Lord is quoting, as has been said, from the 37th psalm, and the reference is obvious. It shows of whom these blessings primarily speak; and "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

There is yet one special form of sorrow to be noted, and it is one that men

> Blessed are they that [t]hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

[t] Lk. 1. 53. Is. 55. 1. *cf.* Lk. 15. 17, 23.

are feeling intensely to-day; not that there is more of it than in the past ages, or at least not that there is necessarily more. Rather, perhaps, because all these questions press more for solution as the day of settlement nears and the harvest of the earth approaches ripeness. "Judgment shall" yet "return to righteousness," long divorced as they have been; but it is not yet so. Still the cry because of oppression goes up into the ear of God, and He is quiet, and men think He regards not. And because they think so, they are rising up to-day to take things into their own hands, and settle them after their own fashion. Yet they can never be so settled: where are the righteous that are fit to rule? Are the few that have shown their unfitness other than fair samples of the many who have not had a chance to try? And if they could get one perfectly righteous, would they submit rejoicingly to him? What says the Cross as to that? The One they need has come and been rejected. "We have no King but Cæsar" was the cry then; and it has been answered by the long reign of Cæsar. Would they choose otherwise to-day? Cæsar may not be in the fashion: they enjoy too well the scramble for the spoils of office. Try experiments in politics they may, and dethrone Cæsar; but Christ will never get His own until God makes His enemies as a foot-stool for His feet.

But "blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness"—*righteousness;* not merely to get their own necks out of the collar: there is no particular moral character about that. But craving for righteousness shall at last be satisfied. The coming of the Lord alone can accomplish this. There is One who can be safely trusted—only One: He, one who had power in His hand once, on earth, and used it, but never for Himself. Personal interests He had indeed, and wrought for them—a joy on account of which He endured the cross, despising the shame: the cross, even *He* could *not* despise. He too, blessed be God, shall be satisfied: "He shall see fruit of the travail of His soul, *and shall be satisfied.*" Amen.

The last three blessings upon character, to which we now come, relate to that in which the children of God manifest most distinctly their divine origin. In mercy, in purity, in peace-making, the character of God Himself is manifested as Light and Love. It is directly said of the peace-makers that they "shall be *called* the sons of God"—recognized in their relation to Him; and here assuredly is the great office Christ Himself assumed. In the first epistle of John, where the possession of eternal life by the possessors of Christianity is in question, similar things are given as the signs of it. There it is, indeed, that we have the statements, "God is light" and God is love:" and consequently, "he that doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." The two things must be found in the same person, as in God they belong together. Love is not truly love that is not holy; holiness is not that, if separated from love.

These seven beatitudes are in like manner one sevenfold blessing. Blessing cannot dwell with cursing; nor the child of light be the child of darkness also. Such cross-checks as to reality are of the greatest possible importance for practical use. In a world of shams there is nothing but needs testing: and with the flesh still in us there is abundant room for self-deception. Saddest of all it is, that even Christians may not be unwilling to be a little blinded; with this additional necessity, of course, that they cannot dictate the limit of this: the enemy to whom they capitulate will be bound by no terms.

It will be thought strange, no doubt, to put down "mercy" under the head of "righteousness" rather than of love; yet this is what I believe its numerical place enforces. Of course, it is not to be doubted that love is shown in it; but that results from what we have just been saying, that one moral attribute, just so far as it is that, will be penetrated, as it were, by other elements. You cannot absolutely separate one part of moral character from another: each is de-

Blessed are the [u]merciful: for they shall receive mercy.

Blessed are the [v]pure in heart: for they shall see God.

u Mk. 11.25, 26. *cf.* ch. 18.12-35. *cf.* 2 Tim. 1. 16; *cf.* ch. 25.34-40. v *cf.* Jer. 17. 9 with Acts 15. 9; Heb. 12.14.

pendent and will not stand alone. Granting that, however, it will still be thought that mercy is more the fruit of love than of righteousness, and that it is artificial to characterize it in this way. Let us turn, then, to Scripture itself to see if it has any help for us.

Now we shall find such in this very "sermon on the mount," and only in the third section of it (ch. vi. 1, 2). In our common version you find there, "Take heed that ye do not your *alms* before men to be seen of them;" but the R.V. rightly substitutes there "*righteousness*" for alms. It will be seen when we come to speak of it, that the character formed by the realization of the presence of God is described for us in three different ways,—manward, Godward, selfward. In each case His examples are different, possibly, from what we might have expected. Manward, He specifies "alms" as righteousness; prayer, as characteristic Godward; fasting, selfward. The truth and wisdom of this we surely cannot doubt, when we realize who is the Speaker here; but here, then, as I have claimed to be the case in the beatitudes, *mercy* is given as a form of righteousness: for undoubtedly *alms*-giving has the character of mercy.

The parable of the unmerciful servant in this same gospel will throw light upon all this (xviii. 23–34). He demands but his due from his fellow-servant, and so might not seem unrighteous; but there is more than this that must come into account. "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: shouldest not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow-servant, even as I had mercy on thee?"

Mercy was with him clearly but righteousness; and so it is with us ever, being what we are, and God being to us what He ever is. Notice distinctly how this is brought out in the recompense. The mercy that the merciful shall find will be, as elsewhere with the enjoyment of these blessings, in the coming Kingdom, and we might expect perhaps something more than this; but all the reward there is mercy, and it is well and needful to be reminded of it. So the apostle, after speaking of the self-forgetting love of Onesiphorus, who had refreshed and ministered to him in his bonds at Rome, prays, "The Lord grant unto him that he may find *mercy* of the Lord in that day" (2 Tim. i. 18). At our best, as at our worst, it is to grace that we are debtors. Grace crowns, even as grace saves.

And now we have clearly the character of God as Light. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," If we remember that the *eyes* are in the heart (Eph. i. 18, R. V.), the connection is most obvious. Indeed this must be the qualification for seeing anything that is worth seeing. When Christ, the image of God, was in the world, the world knew not its Maker. And why? Not because there was not abundant evidence. He Himself declared the reason in that pregnant question which admitted but of one answer: "How can ye believe who receive honor one of another, but seek not the honor that cometh from God only?" The reason for lack of faith is always a moral one: the pure in heart alone can see God.

The Pharisee may cleanse the outside with most religious care and see nothing,—or see indeed the very opposite of the truth; but the soul brought by its very misery to self-judgment, with its back on the world and self, shall see the glorious Vision which lies over against these, unseen by their votaries. And oh, for the bliss that lies beyond this! for the possibilities of vision beyond all that any one yet has made his own! for such is the unrealized wealth of our possession even here. To us the sanctuary is completely open; the veil is rent from top to bottom; and Christ is entered in, to give us entrance. Yet we imitate so much the unbelief of those who in days past besought God to put

2 (10-12): the world in opposition.
(a) for righteousness' sake.

Blessed are the [w]peace-makers: for they shall be called sons of God.
[2]Blessed are they that are [z]persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

w cf. Rom. 12. 19, 20. cf. Phil. 4. 2. cf. Eph. 2. 14.
x John 16. 1-3. 2 Tim. 2. 12; 2 Pet. 2. 20; 2 Pet. 3. 14-17.

distance when He was drawing nigh, and to put a creature of His, though it were a Moses, abidingly between themselves and Him.

The last beatitude, "Blessed are the peace-makers," recognizes the strife and unrest that have come in, while it shows the energy of divine grace which has come to restore and bring back out of it. As the final blessing we see in it the result of what has gone before. There is in it the consciousness of a Voice which has spoken peace with power to still the disorder and reach down to the very root of it. How wonderful to know that that which is the basis of true peace is that in which we see also evil in its worst, but overpowered, made subject, transformed into glorious good. The world's worst crime, the bitter growth of its many centuries of hostility to God, its awful act of allegiance to the prince that it had chosen, has been the Cross. But just its worst is that which, in the triumph of good over it, gives absolute peace. The worst that man could do has but disclosed the infinite good in God; nay, He has met the full power of the enemy in all the weakness of a Son of man. Goodness, with no power but what is inherent in it, has defeated evil with all its accumulated strength. "Out of the eater has come forth meat, and out of the strong, sweetness."

Henceforth, to despair of good is to despair of God. He has made peace by the blood of His cross. How blessed now are the feet of those who are but the messengers of the gospel of peace! who go forth with the trumpet of jubilee to proclaim the fruits of the day of atonement for the Israel of God! the feeblest may recount the praises of that weakness which has defeated the strong, and out of weakness brings forth strength everlasting.

Blessed, then, are the peacemakers! God is Himself that. They, then, shall be called the sons of God. Henceforth, whatever the roughness of the road, their feet are "shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace:" shoes that, like those of Israel of old, never wear out. Well may they be the publishers of this grace to others.

[2]The blessings connected with character are now followed by two which are divine encouragement to those suffering from the consequent opposition of the world. For the world is in opposition to God, as the Cross has once for all proved, and so to those who resemble Him or remind it of Him. This opposition may be indeed disguised in many ways, and so that those who exhibit it may be unconscious of what they are doing—unconscious even (such is the deceitfulness of the heart) that they are of such a spirit. For few indeed will own to themselves a condition so terrible as this. Hence have come in the false gods which have been invented to satisfy the religious principle in man, and yet allow him to follow his lusts and passions without check, or even with the approbation of a misguided conscience. And hence, even under the form of Christianity, people can picture a God after their own heart, and serve him with quite unconscious heathenism.

The persecution of which the Lord speaks here is of two kinds—for righteousness and for His sake. In the first case it is for character, but it is to be noticed that it is represented as less violent and radical than the latter is. Correspondingly, the blessing pronounced is in the latter case greater.

With righteous conduct there may not be linked the open testimony which brings out opposition; and, if it be without personal claim on the beholder, it may even be admired, or at least approved, by him. It is another thing when it does make this claim; when the honesty of a servant, for example, interferes with his employer's profit. Then he may have to suffer; and this is so common a case that it calls for little remark.

(b) for Christ's sake.

Blessed are ye, when they shall [y] revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your [z] reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the [a] prophets who were before you.

y Acts 28. 22. 1 Pet. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 4. 14.
z Rom. 8. 17, 18. 2 Tim. 2. 12.
a 2 Chr. 36. 16. Acts 7. 52; ch. 23. 34-37.

When suffering is for Christ's sake, it is because suffering for Christ presses His claim upon the conscience, and it is *felt*, however little *admitted*, that one has to do with Him. As often said, a man who smiles at a Mohammedan may curse a Christian; and he who will quietly enough discuss the Koran, grows hot and angry in disputing against Scripture. Truth carries with it its own evidence sufficiently to make this difference; which is, therefore, but unwitting homage paid by those who mean nothing of this. Christ turns from the mere abstract "they" in the former case, to speak, as it were, directly into the hearts of these sufferers: "Blessed are *ye* when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for My sake." With this comes the fuller recompense: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

This "reward in heaven," addressed (as few realize it to have been) to Jewish saints, whose portion as such would be earthly, (and so the Lord has before applied the language of the 37th psalm,) and in immediate anticipation of the Kingdom being set up on earth,—is really stranger than it looks to those who contemplate it merely from a Christian standpoint. *Our* portion is rightly recognized as being in heaven, and it is so much the accustomed thing to think of all saints as dying and going there, that we have largely lost sight of the meek inheriting the earth, or else injuriously misapply it. For it is certainly not the rule with the meek now, and in seeking to make it such they would lose their character.

But the Lord, with all Israel's blessings in His hand, and offering Himself to them as Messiah to bring them in for them, naturally speaks according to the Scripture which has in view the time when He will be received and they will be blessed under Him upon earth. According to this view, it is the reward in *heaven* which becomes more exceptional and difficult to understand.

But these blessings—millennial as we call them—being then lost to them through unbelief, belong, in their primary sense, to the future yet;—to a remnant brought to God in a time of trial such as has never yet been known, and who will have to pass through it to enjoy their promises. Of these many will be persecuted even to death, and thus lose what we may call their proper portion. But they will thus receive, in the goodness of God, a higher blessing. Deprived of an earthly, they will enter into a heavenly inheritance, and so are seen in the book of Revelation (xx. 4-6) as a special company of *martyrs, added* to the saints of the first resurrection (the saints of Christian and previous times) who will be already on their thrones.

But besides this, and apart from martyrdom (of which the Lord does not here directly speak), there will be also a preserved remnant, who, passing through the trial of this time, will have a special link with heaven, such as all will not possess (Rev. xiv. 3, 4).*

For *us* there is, of course, no difficulty in an application, which is as true for us as if there were no others who had concern in it. The prophets, of whom our Lord speaks in this connection, dealt with men by the word of God which was given them to communicate, and themselves suffered, not merely as righteous, but as men of God. Yet as to the professing people of God even it could be said, "Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute?"

* For this, upon which it is not the place here to dwell, I may refer to my "Revelation of Christ" pp. 159-162; 208-212.

3 (13-16): saints manifesting Him.

3 Ye are the [b]salt of the earth; but if the salthave lost its [c]savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.

Ye are the [d]light of the world: a city that is set upon a hill cannot be hid. Neither do they light a

b *cf.* Gen. 18. 23-32 *cf.* 2 Thess. 2. 7.
c Mk. 9. 50. Lk. 14. 34, 35. *cf.* 2 Tim. 3. 5. *cf.* Rev. 3. 15. 16.
d *cf.* Eph. 5. 8; *cf.* Rev. 1. 12, 13; *cf.* Jno. 5. 35.

The apostle Peter speaks similarly of these two causes of persecution (1 Pet. iii. 14; iv. 14), and with corresponding emphasis of blessing for those "reproached for the name of Christ." With him it is present, however: "the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you;" but who can measure what is implied in this?

3 Such treatment at the world's hand involves also in itself a place of privilege and responsibility from God, which is two-fold, answering to this two-fold rejection. First, "ye are the salt of the earth." Salt is that which resists corruption; there being in it also a special diffusibility, which makes it a suited image of active and aggressive power. Mere passivity is, in fact, inconsistent with righteousness itself; even what we call "passive resistance" is more than this. There is the government of moral principle, in obedience to which the whole man braces himself up, if but to endure. Example also becomes precept, and that of the most convincing kind: words may be merely words, and light as the breath that forms them. The willing sufferer is so truly the witness, that the old word for witness has come to belong to him. The "martyr" is preeminently the "witness."

But this leads on to the second thing, which is just a place of testimony: "Ye are the light of the world: a city which is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a lamp and put it under the bushel, but on a stand; and it giveth light to all that are in the house. "So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

From it being said, "let men see your *good works*," people often imagine that these are the light itself, and thus make the two things we are considering practically one. Indeed they are made for one another: separate them, and there is at once a fatal deficiency in each. What testimony to Christ can there be, if there be not the life giving evidence? But again, what evidence in the life if the lips are silent as to Christ? Nay, this may be construed so as to make the life of no consequence:—

"For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight:
He can't be wrong, whose life is in the right."

But it is truth which sanctifies: and the life *cannot* be right that is not governed by it. And this is still the most serious effort of the enemy where Scripture is sought to be maintained: "For Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light," says the apostle; "therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed into the ministers of righteousness: whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor. xi. 14, 15). Here these ministers of righteousness *press* the life, to deny the truth; and as no more successful argument can be found than the evil lives of professors of it, so (next to this and in the same line with it) the good deeds of those who are without or who deny the truth, is Satan's wisest one.

Thus it needs the light to shine upon the good works, that they may be seen as such, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Apart from this, they may glorify humanity, or glorify any lie under the sun. Christ is He with whom, in the full reality of it, "light is come into the world," and if "men love darkness rather than light," it is, as He Himself says, "because their deeds are evil" (John iii. 19). We must not be afraid to say this after Him. There are some, thank God, who are profoundly conscious that in His light alone they have seen light, and that there is no light for the world but only in Him. Thus if any are

2 (v. 17-48): The law confirmed, expanded, and supplemented. Christ's words contrasted with those of old.
1 (17-20): its authority affirmed.

lamp and [e]put it under the bushel, but on the lampstand; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. So let your light [f]shine before men, that they may see your good works, and [g]glorify your Father who is in heaven.

2. [1]Think not that I am come to overthrow the law or the prophets: I did not come to overthrow but to [h]complete; for verily I say unto you, Till [i]heaven and

[e] Mk. 4. 21. Lk. 8. 16-18. Lk. 11. 33-36.
[f] *cf.* 1 Thess. 1. 8-10.
[g] *cf.* Phil. 2. 15, 16. *cf.* 2 Cor. 3. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 12. *cf.* 1 Cor. 14. 25.
[h] *cf.* Is. 42. 21. Rom. 3. 31; *cf.* Gal. 5. 14.
[i] Ps. 119. 89; Lk. 16. 17.

to be in any sense a light of the world, there is but one way of it—by reflecting Him. Let us remember, then, the responsibility we have, of bold confession of Him. It is not even righteous to hide from men in need what He has done for them. No: the lamp is not for the bushel,—but for the lampstand: it is not for ourselves that we are made light: the world has right to it, and can produce that right under the broad seal of Christ's commission.

One may perhaps object: "But *my* good works! Alas, that is just my difficulty. With all my inconsistency, I fear that it would more dishonor Christ than honor Him, for *me* to confess Him." One can understand such language; one can even respect the motive, and yet it involves an essential mistake. We are never called to *show* our good works, or even to be *conscious* of them. The Lord's lesson as to almsgiving perfectly illustrates the rule as to all such things, which is "let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." He is not here, we may be sure, teaching a contradictory principle. He takes for granted that there *will* be good works indeed: true faith in Him will surely have its fruit; but *faith* is the very opposite of self-occupation, and certainly of self-satisfaction.

If it be Christ that occupies us, the apprehension of His perfection will give us true self-judgment: it will be as impossible to be careless of evil, as it will to be self-pretentious. We shall "boast in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. iii. 3). This will make the confession of Him both sweet and safe. We shall let our light shine before men; and, poor as we shall ever be in our own account, there *will* be fruit seen in us which shall glorify our Father. This joy in Christ itself will be the best evidence to commend Him to others.

2. We have now a new and very distinct section of the "sermon on the mount," in which the Lord takes the place of One greater than Moses, confirming, expounding, and bringing out the spirituality of the law, while He at the same time supplements and perfects it; not hesitating to put His own words in a place of higher authority than that of those spoken "to them of old time." For "[t]he law made nothing perfect" (Heb. vii. 19), and what Moses had to concede on account of the hardness of their hearts (ch. xix. 8) could now, in the light which had come with Christ into the world, no longer be permitted.

There are fittingly seven subsections here, ending with the enjoining of this very perfection as required of the children of the perfect Father in heaven, who were to manifest as that their Father's character. The higher the place accorded, the higher the standard necessarily. But there are many questions which the whole subject raises, and which we must take up seriously and consider patiently in the order of their suggestion.

[1] First of all, the authority of the law is affirmed, and in the fullest way; but we have to consider in what sense it is affirmed, for it is here that many and grave mistakes are made.

"The law and the prophets" was the recognized phrase for the Old Testament as a whole, the Scriptures of a dispensation already past, but which had not passed themselves with the dispensation. Thus in the Gospel of Luke He says again (xvi. 16): "*The law and the prophets were until John;* since that time the Kingdom of God is preached." Thus it could be said that they were passed,

earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all come to pass. Whosoever, then, shall do away with one of these [j] least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least

[j] Lk. 16. 10. Jas. 2. 10, 11. *cf.* Gal. 3. 10.

and that they were not passed. They were passed as the sole and governing truth: that was now come, or at least was at hand, for which they had been preparing the way; and necessarily this must be now the higher truth, but which must by the very fact bear witness to and establish what has gone before it. No truth can pass away. The more complete that is, to which we have arrived, the more surely must it embrace and set in their place all lower and partial truths which have anticipated and led on to it.

Thus then Christ came not to destroy the law and the prophets. He came to fulfil, or rather complete,—fill them out. What would the Old Testament be without the New? Very much like a finger, pointing into vacuity!

It is plain that the Lord is not here speaking simply of the ten commandments, though these have their place, and a foremost place, in His thoughts, as is manifest by what follows. But the law, in its use in Scripture, is by no means confined to this, and the addition of the "prophets" shows that it must be taken in its widest significance.

The "fulfilment" could not be therefore simply by His obedience to the law, though He *was* fully obedient, but implies the bringing in something additional, as plainly even the mere fulfilment of the prophets must be by the addition of something to the prophecy.

But He goes on now to affirm with His emphatic "verily," that "not one jot or one tittle,—not the smallest letter, nor the projection of a letter*—"shall pass from the law till all come to pass." This, though translated in our own version "be fulfilled," is a different word from that just used; and such coming to pass could not refer to the keeping of commandments. The ten commandments could not be spoken of as something which had to come to pass. But this experience would naturally have to do with the law in its larger significance, which must even, one would say, include the prophets also; and thus the phrase "until heaven and earth pass" would be the real equivalent of all things being fulfilled. For beyond this the Old Testament gives us only the promise of "new heavens and a new earth," about which it says little or nothing (Isa. lxv. 17; lxvi. 22).

Every jot and tittle of the Old Testament remains then never to pass away through the ages of time. It is all confirmed as divine, and therefore stable; but which, of course, does not mean that types and shadows were not to give way to the substance when it should come, or that the "new covenant" would not replace the old: for this would be a contradiction of the Old Testament itself which affirms it. No; the law abides in all its details; and *therefore* in all the limits it imposes on itself, and for all the purposes for which it was given, and *for no other*. This is simple enough, surely, to understand; and yet it is not understood by those, for instance, who would from words like these impose the yoke of the law upon the necks of Christians. For this it is not enough to tell us that the law abides. It is none the less necessary, as the apostle says, that "a man use it lawfully." And he adds to this, in illustration, that "the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient" (1 Tim. i. 8–10).

But the Lord's next words, for many, show without any doubt the perpetual and universal obligation of the law. For here He speaks plainly about doing or not doing, teaching or not teaching, even one of the least of its commandments, and of the recompense or retribution following for this. But while this is certain, it is no less clear that it is to Jews—to men under law—that He is

*Which in several Hebrew letters is the only distinction between them: as between the "r" and the "d," the "h" and the "ch," etc.

2 (21-26): the second commandment of second table: the accusation of the law.

in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall practise and teach them, *he* shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall [k]excel [the righteousness] of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.

[2] Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, [l]Thou shalt not kill; but whosoever shall kill shall be

k *cf.* Lk. 18. 11, 12. *cf.* Rom. 3. 20. *cf.* Phil. 3. 5-7.

l Ex. 20. 13. Deut. 5. 17. *cf.* Rom. 13. 9. *cf.* Deut. 19. 4-13.

addressing Himself. Christianity is not come, nor the Kingdom of heaven, nor is the former even announced as yet. The Lord is simply making a special application of the principle He has declared, to the case of those before Him; whether this is to be in fact wider is not to be inferred from this particular case.

When we do come to Christianity we find, especially in the epistles to the Romans and Galatians, the relation of the law to the saints of the present dispensation carefully argued out. And here two things are emphasized for us. First, that the "*righteousness* of the law" is "fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 4). There is not, there cannot be, any giving up of what is *righteous*—of what is according to the character of God Himself. The Christian standard cannot be lower, but is in fact higher than the legal one, in the same proportion as the Christian position is higher than the Jewish, and as the power communicated in Christianity transcends any that was known in Judaism. The Christian position is in Christ before God. The Christian standard is therefore to walk as Christ walked. The Christian power is that of the indwelling Spirit of Christ. As the greater includes the less, so the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in Christian righteousness.

But, secondly, this does not mean that we are *under* the law. We are *dead to it*, that we might be married to Christ, says the apostle, that we might bring forth fruit unto God (Rom. vii. 4). It is not that the law is dead,* but *we* are; and thus it is carefully guarded from the least possible conflict with what the Lord has here said.

It is not the place here to discuss this doctrine, but the simple statement of it should be enough. It is not the possible meaning of a few texts but the whole doctrine of the apostle, fully argued out, that denies that the Christian is under the law; and to say that it is merely the ceremonial part that is in question, is simply impossible for any one who will read his argument with any care. Is it the ceremonial law that says, "Thou shalt not covet" (Rom. vii. 7)? Is "the good that I would I do not" (ver. 19) ceremonial? It is impossible to say this.

The Lord, here in Matthew, is speaking to Jews, to those confessedly under the law, and in view of the coming Kingdom, which (because of their rejection of the King) has yet not come for them, and which, when it does come, will bring in a different condition of things from Christianity, as indeed the sermon on the mount itself assures us. This we shall have to look at in a little while.

[2] But now the Lord proceeds to develop the righteousness that He requires, in contrast with that of scribes and Pharisees, those zealots for the external. The second table of the law is here pressed, rather than the first: evidently because on this side man is most accessible,—his conscience is most easily roused. Men can invent all sorts of coverings to hide from themselves their state Godward; but if this be tested by their conduct toward men, made in His image, it is not so possible to conceal from oneself the truth. Corruption and violence were of old the characteristics of a world which had reached the limit of divine long-suffering (Gen. vi. 11-13). The Lord takes therefore the sixth and seventh commandments of the law—the second and third of the second table—to illustrate the righteousness which He proclaims, expanding and spiritualizing what was

*See margin, and R. V.

subject to the judgment. But *I* say unto you that every one that is [m]angry with his brother without a cause shall be subject to the judgment; but whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be subject to the [n]council; and whosoever shall say, Fool, shall be liable to the [o]hell of fire. If, then, thou bring thy [p]gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way: first, be reconciled to thy brother, and

[m] 1 John 3. 15. 1 John 4.20. *cf.* Eph. 4. 26.
[n] *cf.* 26. 59. *cf.* Ex. 22.28.
[o] vers. 29,30. ch. 10. 28.
[p] *cf.* Lev. 1. 3, etc. *cf.* ch. 15.5,6. *cf.* Lk. 21.1-4. *cf.* 1 Cor. 5.8.

said to them of old time, so as to make it a new moral revelation to those that hear Him. Moses' commandments become thus, as it were, His own, who is shown as One greater than Moses,—the Prophet of the new dispensation.

The "judgment," the "council" (or Sanhedrin), and the "hell (Gehenna) of fire" are three grades of penalty, as is evident; but in the Kingdom of heaven all under one authority. "Thou shalt not kill" stood as the sixth commandment of the law. God had long before declared that "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." The *executive* law in Israel could go no further than this. It could not deal with the state of the heart but with the outward act only. But the law as expressed on the tables of stone applied not merely to the outward act, and their appending in the way they did the executive to the moral law, inferred that the two were equal in what they covered; as they were not. The state of the heart was thus left out of view in the estimate of accountability toward God, and the practical bearing of the law was nullified for the many.

But now, the kingdom of heaven was drawing nigh, in which another estimate of things would be made and acted on. Anger in the heart, where causeless, and the railing charges which men so lightly bring against one another, would be all crimes against an authority which had at its command not mere physical penalties, limited by the temporal life, but the awful Gehenna of fire—hell itself. It is not meant that under this divine government no mercy would be shown: that is not the point, nor what the words express. But such things would be within the range of jurisdiction, and man would be made to realize that there is a God who judgeth the hearts, and by whom actions are weighed.

But this cuts deep: it is meant to do so, and to rouse the conscience of the hearers to the impossibility of any mere human righteousness in the presence of God. That of scribes and Pharisees would never do for Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and who cannot look upon sin. Their whole method was a false one. They valued apparently God's altar, loading it, Cain-like, with gifts defiled by the hands that offered them. The Lord warns them that they must be reconciled to their justly offended brethren, before presuming to bring such offerings: and while the application here is evidently to Israel, the principle as manifestly applies to every one of us to-day. A sinner coming as such to God is not at all in question: for he can only come as what he is, and has the explicit assurance that he will be received. The Pharisees said truly of the Lord, though they meant it as a reproach, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them;" and the Lord answered, justifying His ways as the Physician of sin-sick souls. Abel, too, bringing his sacrifice to God, "obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying"—not of his works nor of his character, but—"of his gifts" (Heb. xi. 4). How impossible otherwise to have any assurance at all! for as to how much could we never set ourselves right with brethren! Blessed be God, it was for our sins that Jesus died; and our sins are the best of titles to a Saviour of sinners.

But while God would never turn away a sinner thus seeking Him, or delay even for a moment the reception of such an one, this is not to hinder any possible restitution to those we may have injured, but the very contrary. For now we come under the rule before us, and as saints are to lift up holy hands; but

then come and offer thy gift. Make friends with thine [q]adversary quickly whilst thou art with him on the [r]way; lest the adversary deliver thee to the [s]judge, and the judge deliver thee to the [t]officer; and thou be cast into [u]prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt in no wise come out thence till thou hast [v]paid the last farthing.

3 (27-32): the third commandment.

[3] Ye have heard that it was said, [w]Thou shalt not commit adultery; but *I* say unto you, that every one that [x]looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart. But [y]if thy right eye cause thee to stumble, pluck it out and cast it from thee: for it is profitable to thee that one of thy members should perish and not thy whole body be cast into hell. And if thy right hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off and cast it from thee: for it is profitable to thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body be cast into hell.

q Lk. 12. 58, 59. *cf.* Prov. 25. 8.
cf. Lam. 2. 4, 5.
r *cf.* Is. 55. 6. *cf.* Lk. 19. 42.
s *cf.* Deut. 32. 36.
t *cf.* Is. 10. 5, 6, 15.
u *cf.* Is. 42. 22 with Zech. 9. 11, 12.
v *cf.* Is. 40. 2 with Ruth 1. 21, 22.
w Ex. 20. 14. Deut. 5. 18.
x Job. 31. 1. *cf.* 2 Sam. 11. 2-5 with Jas. 1. 14, 15. ch. 15. 19.
y ch. 18. 8, 9. Mk. 9. 43-47. *cf.* De. 13. 6. *cf.* Col. 3. 5.

for a saint this is absolutely necessary for communion. And how many suffer sadly in their souls because of an unjudged condition in this respect! For such the Lord's words here have the gravest importance.

Those to whom they were addressed, however, were Jews, in no wise taking the place of sinners, nor yet truly saints, but legalists: going on with the law, in which they boasted, and not realizing that Moses, in whom they trusted, was necessarily their greatest adversary (John v. 45). Judgment must be the end, if they did not in the meanwhile reconcile themselves to him by the offering of which already the law had spoken, and which the glorious speaker Himself was to provide. This He does not, however, go on to in this place. He is convicting them of a need without the consciousness of which all revelation of God's way of grace would be impossible to be understood. The judgment reached, they would in no wise come out from it until they had paid the uttermost farthing.

Hopeless then was their confidence in the law. But the Lord had not done with it for the purpose of conviction, and of clearing it from the mistakes and perversions of the scribes. He goes over, therefore, from the sixth to the seventh commandment, to show once more that out of the heart the positive transgression comes, and that what was in the heart to do was in fact done as to the guilt of it. Opportunity might be lacking, which altered nothing: the sin was in the heart.

And He urges that if the right eye or hand cause men to stumble, it were better to cut them off and go on maimed through life, than to preserve these and go with a whole body into hell. Better sacrifice what might seem most necessary than give oneself up to the sure penalty of sin. Clearly no asceticism or self mutilation is intended by such an injunction; but men excuse on the plea of necessity what they find to be a constant provocative of sin. God's law admits no pretext of the kind.

[3] In connection with this commandment, the Lord takes up also the law of marriage, to refuse the laxity which even Moses had had to bear with, and still more the license of the rabbins. Moses on account of the hardness of their hearts had only been able to modify somewhat the existing custom of divorce. The "writing" which he had "commanded" was in the interests of social order, not of license, which the prevailing school of Hillel favored in the most shameless manner. The Lord, peremptorily and on His own authority, restricts the allowance of it to that one ground which plainly destroys the very idea of marriage; and declares the putting away of one's wife for any other cause, to be

It hath been said, morever, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a [z]writing of divorcement. But *I* say unto you, that whosoever putteth away his wife, except on account of fornication, [a]maketh her to commit adultery; and whosoever marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery.

4 (33-37): warning of creature-weakness.

[4] Again ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, [b]Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths. But *I* say unto you, [c]Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is the [d]throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the [e]footstool of his feet; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the [f]great King; neither shalt thou swear by thy [g]head, for thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your word be [h]Yea, yea; nay, nay: but what exceedeth these cometh of evil.

z Deut. 24.1. Jer. 3. 1. *cf.* Gen. 2. 23, 24.
a ch. 19.3-9. Mk. 10. 2-12. Lk. 16. 18. *cf.* 1 Cor. 7. 10, 11. *cf.* 1 Cor. 7. 12.
b Ex. 20. 7. Lev. 19.12. Num. 30.2. Deut.23.23.
c *cf.* ch. 26. 63. *cf.* 2 Cor. 2. 17. *cf.* 1 Thess. 2. 5.
d Is. 66. 1. ch. 23. 22.
e Acts 7. 49.
f Ps. 48. 2.
cf. ch. 4. 5. g *cf.* Acts 18. 18; *cf.* Nu.6.18. h ch. 19. 6-22; Jas. 5. 12.

making her commit adultery by another marriage. Also he who marries one so divorced is committing adultery.

The Lord's words cannot surely be less binding upon Christians of the present day; Christianity cannot be content with a lower morality than He enforces here, not as a national or ecclesiastical regulation, but just *as* morality. What was adultery then to Him must ever be adultery; and no human law can alter this in the slightest degree. Let the Lord's people look to it, in a day when men are doing their own wills with continually more audacity.

[4] He proceeds now to another matter, in which again what was tolerated under the law is now forbidden in the new morality which He is enforcing. "Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths," plainly speaks of vowing. There had been great abuse of it, as Israel's history makes manifest: men not hesitating to vow recklessly to God at the dictate of their pride and passion and self-will, to find themselves then entangled by what seemed now their *duty*. Careless profanity had come in at the heels of this, and God's name been profaned by light appeals to it on every occasion, modified by conscience or the lack of it, by every kind of circumlocution and indirect expression of what they dared not openly give utterance to.

The Lord sweeps into His prohibition all these evasions of the third commandment, putting them into the same category, with that which was once permitted. Man's utter weakness, so fully and simply demonstrated by his inability even to change the color of a hair, is made (at least in part) the basis of the prohibition. God might swear, for He could accomplish, and knew, too, all the consequences of that to which He pledged Himself. Beautifully we find Him doing it when seeking to assure the soul of His creature, so ready to doubt the perfect faithfulness even of his God. "Wherefore God, willing to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things"—His word being really as certain as His oath, but not so to man—"wherein it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Heb. vi. 13–18).

We then on our part should be far from what is so suited to His strength, so ill-suited to His feeble creatures. The legal covenant had, however, in its essential features the character of an oath; and the last chapter of Leviticus contemplates typically their failure under it, in contrast with the One who did not fail (*see notes*). The law, therefore, until man was fully proved by it, could not forbid the vow, while it is anachronism, and worse, that it should be imported into Christianity, and that we should hear of covenant-vows, the baptis-

5 (38-42): recompense as from one with God.

6 (43-45): the moral victory over evil.

5 Ye have heard that it hath been said, [i]Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth: but *I* say unto you, that ye [j]resist not evil; but whosoever [k]smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also, and he that would get judgment against thee, and [l]take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him two. [m]Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

6 Ye have heard that it hath been said, [n]Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy; but *I* say unto you, [o]Love your enemies, [[p]bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you,]* and [q]pray for those that [insult you and]* persecute you; that ye

*The bracketed words are omitted by many.

cf. Ex. 23. 4, 5; Prov. 25. 21, 22; *cf.* Rom. 5. 8-10. *p* Lk. 6. 28; *cf.* 1 Cor. 4. 12; *cf.* 1 Pet. 3. 9. *q cf.* Lk. 23. 34; *cf.* Acts 7. 60.

i Ex. 21. 24. Lev. 20. 24. Deut. 19. 21. *j* Prov. 20. 22. Rom. 12. 17, 19, 20. *k cf.* Is. 50. 6 with ch. 26. 67. Lk. 22. 63-65. *l* Lk. 6. 27-31. *cf.* 1 Cor. 6. 7. *cf.* 1 Thess. 5. 15. *m cf.* Deut. 15. 7-11. Lk. 6. 30, 34. *cf.* 1 Tim. 6. 18. *n* Lev. 19. 18. *cf.* Deut. 23. 3-6. *o* Lk. 6. 27, 35.

mal vow, etc., so contrary to the simplicity of Christ's institutions for us, and to the grace which we know to be alone our strength. The vow is wholly passed away, but to make room for Christ's strength to rest upon us, our very infirmities to be gloried in on this account (2 Cor. xii. 9, 10). God's oath is sworn to us, that His abundant grace shall be our sufficiency.

5 The Lord now takes up the necessary principle of law, to contrast it with that non-resistance of evil which He enjoins upon His disciples. The righteousness of the law of course remains righteousness, but it does not require of any that *they* should exact for personal wrongs. There is no supposition of the abrogation of law or of its penalties. The government of the world is not in question, but the path of disciples in it. Where they are bound by the law, they are bound, and have no privileges. They are bound, too, to sustain it in its general working, as ordained of God for good. Within these limits there is still abundant room for such practice as is here enjoined. We may still turn the left cheek to him that smites the right, or let the man that sues us have the cloak as well as the coat which he has fraudulently gained: for that is clearly within our rights. If the cause were that of another, we should have no right of this kind, nor to aid men generally in escape from justice or in slighting it. The Lord could never lay down a general rule that His people should allow lawlessness, or identify themselves with indifference to the rights of others. He speaks only of what is personal to oneself,—"smite *thee*," "sue *thee*," "compel *thee*:" and here the law itself would recognize one's liberty.

His disciples are not only to yield, but to show readiness, at least, to do more. They are not to be overcome of evil, but to overcome it with good. They are under a higher than any earthly government, which will take abundant care of them, and are freed from the need of advocating their own cause, or taking arms in their own defense. And they are partakers of such royal bounty that they are to be themselves bountiful. "Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away."

All this needs wisdom in following out, that it may answer its end:—that God may be honored in it, and men be blessed. It must not be allowed to degenerate into a moral laxity which may counterfeit it, but will then be its opposite. True love alone will find its way here, but will certainly find it,—clear-sighted, as all true love is. To this, therefore, the Lord now goes on.

6 Men understand, at least, that they ought to love their neighbor: but their qualifications narrow even their idea of such a duty, while they have *invented* a duty of *hate*, which no law-giver perhaps would dare inscribe upon his tables, but to which there is given nevertheless a too ready and practical obedience.

may be the sons of your Father who is in heaven: for he [r]maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain upon the just and unjust.

7 (46–48): the perfection enjoined.

7 For if ye [s]love those who love you, what reward have ye? do not the tax-gatherers also the same? And if ye greet your brethren only, [t]what do ye beyond others? do not even the Gentiles the same? Be ye then [u]perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect.

[r] Acts 14.17. Ps. 65.9–13. *cf.* Lk.12.16, 17.
[s] Lk.6.32–34. *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 10.
[t] *cf.* ver. 20. *cf.* Lk.10.25–37.
[u] *cf.* Gen.17. 1. *cf.* Lk.6.36. Eph. 5.1, 2; *cf.* 1 Pet.1.15,16.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy" is what he would justify to his conscience, as he approves it in his heart. But the law has no other word than "neighbor" here, as it has no other duty than to love him; and the Lord specifically puts even our enemies into this class. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies;" not even do them good merely, though that might seem much, but "*love* them." Hard work, indeed, and impossible, save in the light of a greater love: for every day that the sun shines or the rain falls upon this evil world which has turned away from God, such love is demonstrated, leading men to repentance. *God* blesses those who curse Him, does good to those that hate Him,—sets us the sweetest and most wonderful example of infinite compassion, which He who was Speaker here has filled out to the full, by taking His place among those despitefully used and persecuted, and pouring out not only His heart, but His heart's blood for His persecutors. Thus that which might seem impossible even with God, is in God become Man made actual.

When the Lord spoke, this last word had not yet been uttered; but He was there who was to utter it, the Son of the Father, and opening to men the way into divine relationship, which He encourages His disciples to apprehend and realize in a way unknown till now. "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven" implies acceptance of this wondrous place in such a way as to let it be manifest in the character displayed. And how responsible are they to whom such grace is given! To live in it is to acquire power to fill it out.

7 They must not, then, with this high place accept the moral code that would suit even those typical sinners, the publicans or tax-gatherers—those instruments of Roman greed and oppression. For these even were capable of returning love for love. For those whose Father is in heaven, nothing can be permitted as the standard but perfection—His own moral perfection. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" is supreme, flawless perfection. And nothing else would do as a standard. The moment we admit evil into this, the evil has become part of the standard, and God is made to go with what He hates.

We must, however, distinguish between having perfection *before* us,—condemning ourselves for whatever is not that, and honestly pressing after it—and the self-flattery that can assert "we have attained it." It is in fact because perfection is before us that we cannot say so. Will any one indeed venture to assert that he is morally perfect *as God is?* The highest pretension must surely shrink a little from making such a claim. Yet here is the pattern: we are to be "imitators of God as dear children" (Eph. v. 1, *Gk*), aspiring after that which will always be beyond us, and which as being so, will always work in us self-abasement and humiliation, instead of self-complacency.

This, then, is to be the aim: and while it is owned that we fall short, let us remember that the very falling short implies an aim: if we do not *aim*, we cannot fall short. If we aim at something lower, the standard is given up: we are then doing our own will, and not God's.

Let us remember also that there are two kinds of perfection, which it is important to distinguish from one another: perfection in *degree*, something that cannot be exceeded, and perfection as wholeness, entireness. We say of a wheel,

3 (vi. 1-18): Before the Father.
1 (1-4): Righteousness manward.

3. [1] Take heed that ye do not your [v] righteousness before men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven. When therefore thou doest [w] alms, do not sound a [t] trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have [x] glory of men: verily I say unto you, they *have* their [y] reward. But when *thou* doest alms,

[v] *cf.* Deut. 24. 13. *cf.* Ps. 112. 9. *cf.* Rev. 19. 8.
[w] *cf.* Rom. 12. 8. *ctr.* Lk. 18. 12.
[x] vers. 5, 16. *cf.* Jno. 12. 43 with Jno. 5. 44.
[y] *ctr.* Phil. 3. 7, 8; *cf.* Mk. 12. 41-44.

it is perfect, because it has all its parts; while, as to its workmanship, it may be very imperfect. Now, the child of God may be feeble, and is; but as a "partaker of the divine nature" he should not be *maimed*. In God, love and light belong together: no one of these, apart from the other, could represent His nature. Love without righteousness could not be divine love. Righteousness without love, would not be divine righteousness. So love, too, just to those who love us, may be, as the Lord tells us, only a publican's love, but not God's: it is not a feeble likeness, but a distortion. Where the new nature is, there the moral character of God is found,—infantile, perhaps, as to development, and yet in it the Father's image shines. "Love," then, "your enemies," says the Lord, "that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."

This closes the second part of the sermon on the mount with the seal of divine perfection. In it the greater Prophet than Moses speaks, with a brighter glory in His face than Moses' face could show.

3. The third section occupies the first eighteen verses of the sixth chapter. It has upon it plainly the seal of a third section, as bringing us into the sanctuary, and teaching us to realize the Father's presence and to act as before Him.

The first verse furnishes the principle, which is then illustrated, amplified and enforced, in three different applications. The text is: "Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father who is in heaven." The word is allowed to be "righteousness" here, as in the Revised Version, and not "alms," as in the common one. In the following verses "alms" is right.

This is then illustrated in three different applications, manward, Godward and selfward,—almsgiving, prayer and fasting. Each of these is, of course, but an illustration of the principle; but the illustration is in each case chosen in divine wisdom, and must therefore have special suitability.

[1] Almsgiving is chosen to express what is "righteousness" toward men. So it is distinctly called, and indeed was by the Rabbins also. Thus we can see how the Lord, in reproving a righteousness done before men, naturally takes this up as a most showy form of it, and which indeed was lauded in the most extravagant terms by the senseless formalists of the day.* He speaks of men sounding a trumpet before them, in the synagogues and in the streets, when they gave them: language which is perhaps only symbolical of the way in which they blazoned abroad their acts of charity, but for which also they might assign the most plausible reasons. In fact, among all people, at all times, almsgiving is a charity which readily enough has been accepted at its fullest value. While it can be practised with so little personal sacrifice, it yet ministers to need so various and so palpable,—it has so much the form of benevolence, that it seems like cynicism to question if the spirit be there; it is in itself so right, and puts one so plainly in the *company*, at least, of those who do right: all this makes it of priceless value, therefore, to those who seek the praise of men. They can in no way, perhaps, so readily attain their object: but then, alas, "they have their reward:" it is all they will possess for ever.

But, on the other side, almsgiving, as here classed by the Lord Himself as a

* Edersheim quotes a specimen as all-sufficient: "He that says, 'I give this *sela* as alms, that my sons may live, and that I may merit the world to come,' behold, this is the perfectly righteous."

let not thy [z] left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret; and thy [a] Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee.

2 (5-15): prayer.

2 And when ye [b] pray, ye shall not be as the hypocrites: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, so that they may appear to men: verily I say unto you, they *have* their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy [c] chamber, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray unto thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee.

z *cf.* ch. 8. 4.
a *cf.* Lk. 14. 12-14. *cf.* Phil. 4. 17-19. *cf.* 2 Tim. 1. 16-18. *cf.* Heb. 6. 10.
b *cf.* Lk. 18. 10-12. ch. 23. 5-7, 14. Mk. 12. 38-40. Lk. 20. 46, 47.
c *cf.* ch. 24. 26; *cf.* Mk. 6. 46; *cf.* Lk. 5. 16.

form of righteousness, is a significant witness to us that mercy is not something supererogatory, but the ministry of love is itself a debt—a due. A man who withholds from another what he can give him for his need is not even righteous; and this removes also the thought of merit from the mercy shown. Only in a world of habitual *un*righteousness could the thought of the fulfilment of duty associate with it any thought of merit. "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin," says the apostle (Jas. iv. 17). And the Lord bids us on the other hand, "When ye shall have done all things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have *done*"—not we have *not* done—"that which was our duty to do" (Luke xvii. 10). And with the comparative righteousness which is all that is ours at best,—a righteousness that still leaves us sinners,—how impossible should be the claim of merit! But to love, with all that this implies, is mere commanded duty; yea, to love one's neighbor as oneself is the injunction of the law. While the Christian standard rises higher still in its law of self-sacrifice, and all the marvelous enforcement of this in the example of Him who has given us life through His death. For those who have known this, there is no possible margin of devotedness outside of that duty which His love has endeared.

Almsgiving shrinks in this way into a small thing indeed; while this diminution of it cannot make it less imperative. All this, then, that our Lord addresses to a Jewish audience, our Christianity only emphasizes for us in every particular. We are of all men—to all men—the witnesses of grace. Debtors to it, absolutely, ourselves, we are debtors to show it to others.

And as to the secrecy of almsgiving, alas, how have Christians forgotten such words in their displayed charities, justifying the display as letting their light shine! The contrast is too manifest here to need enlargement.

2 The second illustration of the need of being before God is furnished by what is itself a duty Godward. Prayer is the expression of creature-need and dependence. It is utterly inconsistent with any thought of pride and self-satisfaction. Yet, alas, we can unite these incompatible things together: think of the utter and awful contradiction in terms, of praying to *God*, in order to be seen of *men!* "As the hypocrites do," says the Lord; and yet, is it not a hypocrisy which creeps often into public prayers, where those who pray cannot, after all, be so characterised? Are not those who lead the prayers of others especially liable to act, in some measure, in this way? the consciousness of being before others influencing them often in the matter and style of their petitions! How much shorter, how much simpler, how different in various ways, might many of our prayers be, if we were alone before God, instead of in the prayer-meeting!

What records would not our chambers—our secret hours—afford, of our true state in respect of conscious dependence on and seeking after God, if we were perfectly faithful to ourselves in these respects! In secret prayer it is that our souls above all lay hold of God, and faith roots itself in His omnipotence. That prayer with us is to be *characteristically* in secret is here quite unmistakable.

But when ye pray, use not [d]vain repetitions, as the nations do; for they think that they will be heard because of their much speaking. Be not ye, therefore, like unto them: for your Father [e]knoweth of what things ye have need before ye ask him.

d *cf.* 1 Ki. 18. 26-39. *cf.* ch. 26. 39-44. *cf.* 2 Cor. 12. 8, 9.
e *cf.* Rom. 8. 26, 27. *cf.* Is. 65. 24; *cf.* ver. 32.

And this will of itself very much exclude the vain repetitions against which our Lord warns His hearers, and which Christianity has by no means banished from our midst. If there be little need to explain or apply, the warning still needs serious attention on the part of Christians.

Our Lord follows this with that divine model for prayer, which for fullness combined with perfect directness and simplicity, so manifestly fulfils the conditions indicated. More than this, the order and proportion of the petitions are (with all else) perfect, and claim our earnest attention. They betoken a condition of heart which, where it is found, must ensure answer,—the state of one over whom God's will is supreme; for whom He is first and last, beginning and end. To realize such a condition would make us realize the meaning of those words of the Lord, "Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done to you." Clearness of apprehension would go with it, and confidence of success: "the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much" (Jas. v. 16).

A perfect *model* of prayer this is and must be: whether designed for a form, and especially whether intended for Christians, is another matter. The differences in Luke (xi. 2-4), now recognized in the Revised Version, would of course be the simplest argument against the first. Apart from this, the gift of the Spirit to Christians, for those who realize what is the characteristic feature of the present dispensation (John xvi. 7; Rom. viii. 26, 27), and who is distinctly named as the Intercessor within us according to God, would still more hinder such from interpreting it as a form to be used by Christians now. That it is not in the Lord's Name is evident upon the face of it, and confirmed (if it need confirmation) by His words to His disciples afterward: "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in My Name" (John xvi. 24); and this is a difference which cannot be remedied by supplying an omission where there is none, and making that really imperfect which is perfect. This very perfection, if we consider the state of the disciples at the time it was given them, would suggest once more its *not* being intended for Christians in the Christian state.

One is more concerned, however, to point out the actual perfection of the prayer, than to dwell upon such distinctions,—even though they have to do with differences vital to Christianity; but here is not the place for their examination. Let us consider now briefly the petitions in it, and what they imply.

The whole prayer is an address to God as Father: "Our Father who art in heaven." What underlies this title given to God is in fact a relationship never before made known in its true character, between Him and the true disciples of this blessed Teacher. "I have declared unto them Thy Name," He says elsewhere, "and will declare it, that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (John xvii. 26). This name of "Father" is something wholly different from those Old Testament titles, which have declared as the "Almighty" His power, or as "the Most High" His supremacy, or as "Jehovah" His enduring immutability. "Father" declares what His heart is toward us, while it gives us title to enjoy the love implied. The character of the tie is such as gives claim and confidence,—a claim He cannot deny. How great an encouragement to the prayer of faith!

No doubt, there had been long before anticipations of what is here conveyed. At the very birth of the nation God had announced, "Israel is my son, even my first-born" (Ex. iv. 22). And this, which had been repeated in the law, and made the foundation of preceptive argument—"Ye are the children of Jehovah your God" (Deut. xiv. 1),—might seem in itself to justify Israelites such as were these disciples who had gathered round the Lord, in taking the place He

After this *f*manner, therefore, pray ye, *g*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy *h*Name. Thy *i*kingdom come; thy *j*will be done, as in heaven [so] also upon *k*earth. Give us this day our daily * *l*bread; and

*Or "needed."

f Lk.11.1-4. *ctr.* Jno.16. 24. *cf.* Jude 20. *cf.* Eph. 6. 18.
g cf. ch. 5.9. 16. *ctr.* Rom.8. 15. *h cf.* Mal. 1. 11; *ctr.* Rom. 2. 24. *i cf.* Ps. 22. 28; *cf.* Obad. 21; *cf.* Dan. 2. 44; *cf.* Dan. 7. 17; *cf.* Zech. 14. 9. *j* Ps. 115. 3; Dan. 4. 35. *k cf.* Jer. 31. 34; *cf.* Is. 2. 2-5. *l cf.* Is. 33; 14-16; *cf.* Ps. 37. 3, 25; *cf.* 1 Ki. 17. 1-16.

gives them here. But in fact this, in the national ruin that had intervened, had passed away. Israel was now Lo-ammi, "not my people," though with a promise for the future, of a restoration not yet fulfilled, whereby they should be called "the sons of the living God" (Hos. i. 9, 10). They could not comfort themselves with assurances thus forbidden to them, nor with a legal covenant to which God's faithfulness on His part could but make them partakers of a curse, rather than a blessing.

God is, however, the God of grace and of resurrection. He does not, indeed, patch an old garment with new cloth. He does not even merely restore what has failed and gone. But He can replace it with that which is better; and so much better, that the old and removed blessing shall be but the shadow of that which replaces it. Both together thus witness, if on the one hand to the failure of man, on the other to the changeless goodness and grace in God.

The old relationship to the Unchangeable had after all changed. The "children of Jehovah" were now as a nation outcast from Him. That tie, stable as it might look, had not the elements of endurance in it. As we look back upon it from the standpoint of the new revelation, it is simple to understand that Israel's sonship was not the result of new birth, as now it is for those in Christian relation. An Israelite was not necessarily, because that, a true believer in that God who had drawn nigh to him. A Jew was, as the apostle says (Gal. ii. 15), a "Jew by *nature;*" but that nature was not a *new* nature. The child of law, as he afterwards shows by the type of Hagar and Ishmael (iv. 22–31), was but "born after the flesh," and showed the nature of the "wild man," as Ishmael did (Gen. xvi. 12). Thus there was no real nearness to God or fellowship with Him necessarily implied in sonship of this kind. Adoption there was in it, but not regeneration. Consequently it never secured from eternal judgment, nor even from day to day, except as obedience lasted or God's pity spared.

But the Father of whom Christ now spoke to His own, was not the Father of the nation in such a manner. Only the pure in heart should see Him; only the peacemakers be called His children. Even before this, though we do not find it in this Gospel, He had taught Nicodemus the absolute necessity of new birth, and that, while that which was born of the flesh was only "flesh," that which was born of the Spirit—a divine Person—was "spirit,"—divine in nature (John iii. 6). Here, it is plain, is the foundation of relationship to God, a real new yet divine life communicated, which is therefore "eternal life." For eternal life is not that simply which, when it begins, abides and has no ending. It is that which, though *in us* it begins, *in itself* never did. Receiving this, we are not merely *adopted* sons; we are that, truly; but none the less are we *born* into the family of God, and partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet. i. 4), children of God indeed.

How far all this had been entered into by the disciples as yet, is another question. That it was what was in the Lord's mind we know, and what He was leading them into,—what therefore underlies the teaching of the prayer. This Father in heaven, known for what He is, becomes thus rooted in the affections, supreme in the heart that has learned the cry of children. Of this, at least, the prayer is the expression. The first petition is one that shows how jealous for this Name revealed to it is the soul that has truly entered into the revelation: "Father, hallowed be Thy Name." May no thought come in to profane this wondrous intimacy now existing; may grace not be abused to license; may all

[m] forgive us our debts, [n] as we also have forgiven our debtors; and [o] lead us not into temptation, but [p] deliver us from evil.* For [q] if ye forgive men their offences,

[m] *cf.* Jer. 33. 8. *cf.* Dan. 9. 19. *ctr.* Col. 2. 13, 14.
[n] Mark 11. 25, 26.

* Or from the evil one.

cf. Col. 3. 13. [o] ch. 26. 41; *cf.* Luke 21. 34-36; *cf.* Rev. 3. 10. [p] *cf.* Jer. 30. 7; *cf.* Dan. 12. 1; *cf.* ch. 24. 15-22. [q] Lk. 17. 3, 4; ver. 12; *cf.* Eph. 4. 32.

thy people worship with unshod feet in this place of nearness. Such surely will be the first cry of the heart that has felt—and in proportion as it has felt—the ecstatic joy of God so made known to us.

But the world knows not this joy, and the abounding evil in it is but the shadow upon hearts and lives that have turned away from the light of God. Hence the next cry necessarily is, "Thy Kingdom come! Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven!"

This, if true prayer, must be the outcome of a heart that is itself obedient. And what an absorbing desire this should be to us! The misery and moral ruin and dishonor to God on every side may well force from us such a prayer as this. Where is there another like it for the magnitude of that which is embodied in it? God, as it were, everywhere set in His place, every thing finding its relation to Him as the planets to their central sun; here is universal blessedness beyond which we can conceive no greater: all peace, happiness, goodness, are implied in it. And this is the practical power and glory of faith that it sets us where, from a full heart, such a prayer can well; that it enthrones God of its own free choice upon that absolute throne which alone His throne can be; that it realizes His will to be only the expression of His glorious nature,—in which every divine attribute blends and harmonizes.

For this Kingdom of the Father we must look beyond all dispensations to the sabbath of God's own rest. To confound it with the millennium would be an entire mistake, and necessarily lower its character terribly. The millennium, with all its blessedness, is but a step toward this glorious consummation. It is earth's "regeneration" (Matt. xix. 28); but *after* which, as in our own case, (not in it,) must come the eradication of evil and the change to eternal conditions. The millennium ends in an outbreak of evil, the most defiant that the world has ever seen (Rev. xx. 7–10). The judgment that follows reaches to the very frame-work of material things, and the earth and *its* heavens—the "firmament" of the second day (Gen. i.)—pass away in fire, to make way for that new heaven and earth in which righteousness shall dwell. Then, with all evil subdued and all things made anew, the Son of God, having brought about the very condition for which He teaches His disciples here to pray, will give up His separate human Kingdom to the Father (1 Cor. xv. 24–28) and the Kingdom of the Father here contemplated will at last have come.

Important it is not to confound the temporary with the eternal, the divine outcome with any intermediate step. Such confusion is no less mischievous for the heart than for the mind; for only where God rests should our hearts find rest. But for us it is true that the Kingdom of the Father will have come even before the millennium, when, caught up at the coming of the Lord to be ever with Him, the Father's house receives us into its "many mansions." And thus it is that in the parables of the Kingdom, (in the Gospel we are now considering,) when the present form of it is closed by the appearing of the King, it is said, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, *in the Kingdom of their Father*" (ch. xiii. 43). To this even then we shall have come.

With this petition for the coming of the Father's Kingdom, the first half of the prayer ends: the petitions following are of a different character. But what happiness would it not be for us, if the glory of God were thus, and as taught of the Spirit, the first desire of the heart, the first thing to utter itself, therefore, in our prayers!

But the remainder of the petitions are, as just said, personal; and here all is

your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye do not forgive men their offences, [r]neither will your Father forgive your offences.

r *cf.* ch. 18. 21-35. *cf.* Jas. 2. 13.

characterized by the most perfect moderation. A sense of dependence, of failure, and of frailty, manifests itself conspicuously in them; while the needs felt are realized as those of others of the same family of faith, who are associated, therefore, in all the petitions. The prayer is, indeed, a family prayer throughout; the expression of a common interest from which no one withdraws himself to walk alone. How well we should be cared for, indeed, if all were thus remembered by all, and the family tie united all the family.

It is not straining the request for daily bread, to make it comprehend also a spiritual application. With the Lord it would be simply impossible, while remembering the need of the body, to forget the immensely greater need of the soul. In both ways also the supply must be continual. The manna must be fresh every morning, and freshly gathered as the morning comes: hoarded, it breeds worms and stinks. There is no release from a dependence, which makes us sensible only of the love which constantly ministers, and keeps us near to the gracious Hand of Omnipotence. It is only treating us as children who are at home with the Father, not to provide for independence or absence from Him. We are not to renew the prodigal's experience, after being brought back from the far-off country; and it is not stint but love that deals thus with us.

The petition following needs more care to apprehend it, and Christians have lost much here by not realizing the fuller grace that has now come in for us, so far beyond what these disciples, though so near the Lord, could know. The great sacrifice was not yet offered, and the precious fruits of it could not yet be understood. The place of acceptance in the Beloved—identification with Him who has represented us before God in His atoning death, and now represents us in unending life—was yet among the things which could not be communicated. But with this, as quickened together with Him, is necessarily joined the forgiveness of *all* trespasses (Col. ii. 13). "By one offering He hath perfected for ever those that are sanctified" (Heb. x. 14).

Now it is certainly true that with this the prayer before us is in no wise in contradiction. The Lord could not mean to teach His disciples here that sins were only remitted from time to time, in answer to prayer about them. Yet those ignorant of the settled acceptance which the gospel teaches have used it, and continually use it, in this very way. On the other hand some would press, on account of such implication, the impossibility of the intelligent use, by the Christian, of such a petition. Both views are wrong, the prayer itself being perfectly in keeping—how could it be otherwise?—with the fullest revelation of divine grace. The simple fact that it is to the *Father* removes every difficulty. It is thus a *Father's* forgiveness that is besought by those who distinctly take the place of relationship. As between God and His creatures, the precious blood of Christ perfects forever those who, in faith, have taken shelter under it; but that only *brings* such under a *Father's* government who, "without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work" (1 Pet. i. 17), and who cannot but take notice of the conduct of His children, just because they are that, and of His love to them as that. Loss of communion, with chastening for restoration, are consequences of these trespasses; and the conditions implied in the petition itself, and emphasized by the Lord just afterward, show the holy character of this government. We must forgive, if we are to be forgiven. With an unforgiving spirit toward others we cannot enjoy communion with Him whose nature is love, and who must have His image reproduced in us.

This seen, there is no contradiction to the grace of Christianity. And yet it is true that in it we have nowhere any exhortation to prayer to the Father for what is here besought. It is Christ Himself rather who is declared to be our "Advocate with the Father" (1 John. ii. 1); and the same blessed Person offers Himself for the cleansing of our feet from the defilements of the way, that we

3 (16–18): fasting.

3 And when ye [s] fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces so that they may [t] appear unto men to fast; verily I say unto you, they *have* their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, [u] anoint thy head and wash thy face, so that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father who is in secret; and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee.

[s] *cf.* Is. 58. 3-7. Lk. 18. 12.
[t] vers. 1,2,5. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 12. *cf.* 1 Sam. 16. 7.
[u] *cf.* Dan. 1. 12-16. *cf.* Prov. 14. 10. *cf.* 2 Cor. 6. 10.

may have part with Him (John xiii. 8). But all this awaited expression necessarily till the crowning work was done; and as to the last the Lord's own words are: "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know afterwards" (ver. 7). That *we* are not exhorted to prayer of this kind may well be due to the danger of such confusion of different things as we know to have been made here; while it could not be urged that such prayer intelligently used is in any wise inconsistent with Christian position.

Again, the sense of frailty comes out in the closing petition not to be led into temptation, but delivered from the evil. It is not in opposition to this that James bids us "count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations" (Jas. i. 2). The first is the expression of that self-distrust which is the fruit of self-knowledge. Who that knows himself but must realize this? and fear, therefore, what the hour of trial may manifest as to his weakness? But then this is just the spirit in which, if it be the will of God to bring him into circumstances of this kind, he will cleave to the only Source of strength and find it. *In* the trial he needs the consoling assurance of God's hand over it and working through it; and if he has come into it, not in self-confidence but in the path with Him, every element of it will work for good to him: it may well be a time of truest joy. Patience will be that which will work experience, and experience hope; and, patience having its perfect work, he will be "perfect and entire, needing nothing."

It would seem to be rightly here "deliver us from the evil," rather than "from the evil *one*," though either rendering is possible; but the larger view includes the narrower, and is therefore more suitable. The evil one is a most real and powerful enemy; but the evil in ourselves is still more to be dreaded, as only through this can he gain advantage over us. In this most concise prayer, the fullest meaning is the best.

It is characteristic of the law that, with all its forms, no form of prayer was ever prescribed to the people. When the disciples ask for one, as we are told they did (Luke xi. 1), they refer to John the Baptist as having taught his disciples, and not to Moses. The people of God, as conscious of their need, had always expressed it, and of course the Old Testament is full of examples of this: but all the more striking is it that the law did not prescribe anything of the kind. It was God's schoolmaster to teach man his weakness, but then it did this by claiming from him strength.

3 In fasting the Lord touches that inward mortification which expresses the realization of what man is in the sight of God: in one's own sight, therefore, in proportion as we have attained to oneness of mind with Him. In the mount with God neither Moses nor Elijah ate or drank. "If then ye be risen with Christ," says the apostle,—"mortify your members which are upon the earth" (Col. iii. 1, 5). Fasting is treating them as if they did not exist,—not ministering to self: an unnatural condition which implies fallen nature; you can do nothing with it, but leave it out. The apostle speaks of this as the true characteristic of the children of God (Rom. viii. 13, 14): "if ye through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live; for as many as are led of the Spirit of God *they* are sons of God." It is as self-realization before God, that fasting comes here in its numerical place.

In fact, in Israel, with the Pharisaic externalism which characterized the

SECTION 4. (vi. 19–34.)

The way amid the temptation of the world.

1 (19-23): single-eyed integrity.

[1] Lay not up for yourselves [v] treasures upon the earth, where [w] moth and rust doth consume, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in [x] heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where thy treasure is there will thy [y] heart

Lk. 16. 9; 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19. *y cf.* Col. 3. 1, 2; *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 4; *cf.* Heb. 10. 34.

v 1 Tim. 6. 6-11. Prov. 23. 4.
w Prov. 23. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 17. *cf.* Job 1. 8-19. *cf.* Luke 12. 15-21. Jas. 5. 1-5.
x ch. 19. 21. Lk. 12. 33.

nation, fasting was abused to its very opposite. It was made to accredit self, instead of discrediting it. It brought it into prominence, instead of setting it aside. And it has always been a feature, not merely in asceticism (which the Lord is plainly not rebuking here), but in formalism also. He extinguishes this by making it a thing to be before the Father and not before men: before the eyes of Him who sees in secret. As to the practice of it, He does not really decide anything; and as to its place in Christianity, we must inquire about that elsewhere. That the true life is one that is to be lived before God is the main point upon which He is here insisting.

4. We pass now out of the sanctuary into the world, but carrying with us the sanctuary still, as Israel did in their journey through the wilderness. The way is thus not merely marked out morally for us, but we are empowered also for it; and we need this, for, wilderness as it is, the trials of the way are real ones, and if they are not in the way of allurement, the allurements of Egypt are felt *through them*, as we see with Israel. "The leeks, and the onions and the garlic" —earthy enough and never much above the earth,—displace (for they only compete with by displacing) the "bread from heaven;" and it is to Egypt that the heart turns back.

[1] Here we have the remedy for it all: a word which, if it could be spoken to a Jewish remnant in view of millennial blessing, is so fully and transparently our own as Christians that the natural thing is to take it as if it had no other application. Yet, for those who are to inherit the earth, in the day to which all this looks forward, there will be abundant need to lay up their treasures in heaven, in the care of Him who is coming to give reward to His saints, and while the earth is yet vibrating with shocks of upheaval, such as the Old and New Testaments combine to assure us will be, and which God will use also to make the frightened hind to calve (Ps. xxix. 9, *see notes*)—the nation of Israel thus to be born spiritually, as in one day (Isa. lxvi. 8).

From this, however, without losing sight of it, we may turn to consider our Lord's words in the way most profitable to ourselves; and here, as I have said, all is transparent. Heaven is where we belong; the earth is simply what we are traveling through. Our need and our privilege are one—to have our treasures there where nothing decays or corrupts, and where nothing can deprive us of them. Not only shall we then not lose the treasures, but the heart too will rest in undisturbed security, outside all alarms, and our feet will not be endangered by a loss of balance.

Let us note well that the Lord says, "where your treasure is, there your heart *will* be." He does not say, "*ought* to be," but "*will*." We are not allowed to escape with the easy assurance that what we are diligently accumulating our hearts are not engaged with. Why, then, accumulate it? We should say of a man who was heaping up sticks and straws and rubbish, that he was a maniac. But to him, nevertheless, the worthless pile is valuable; and that you can argue most surely from the fact of the accumulation. Who would not change worthless paper into good security? and this we are privileged to do; while treasure in heaven will keep the heart there, and draw the feet on to where the heart is.

And this alone gives a single eye: there is no confusion, no distraction of vis-

be also. The [z]lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be [a]single, thy whole body shall be full of light; but if thine eye be [b]evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, then, the light that is in thee be darkness, how [c]great the darkness!

2 (24): the contradiction of divided service.

[2]No one can serve [d]two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other: ye cannot serve God and [e]mammon.

3 (25, 26): the heart's sanctuary-refuge.

[3]Therefore I say unto you, Be not [f]careful for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink; neither for your body, what ye shall put on: is not the life [g]more than food, and the body than clothing? Consider the [h]birds of heaven that they sow not, nor reap, nor gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feedeth them: are *ye* not much [i]better than they?

4 (27-30): human impotence.

[4]And which of you by being careful can [j]add one cubit to his growth? and why are ye careful about clothing? Learn well as to the [k]lilies of the field, how they grow:

z Lk. 11.34-36.
a *cf.* Prov. 4. 25. *cf.* Heb. 2. 9. *cf.* 2 Cor. 3. 18. *cf.* Jno. 7. 17. *ctr.* 2 Pet. 1. 9.
b *cf.* ch. 5. 28. *cf.* ch. 20. 15. *cf.* Mark 7. 21, 22. *cf.* Prov. 23. 6, 7.
c *cf.* Mark 4. 11, 12. *cf.* Jno. 1. 5. *cf.* Jno. 8. 12. *cf.* Jno. 12. 35, 36, 40.
d Lk. 16. 13. *cf.* 1 Ki. 18. 21. *cf.* 2 Ki. 17. 41. *cf.* Rev. 3. 15, 16.
e Gal. 1. 10. Jas. 4. 4.
f Luke 12. 22-31; ver. 31; Heb. 13. 5, 6; *cf.* Phil. 4. 6, 7; *ctr.* Phil. 3. 18, 19; *ctr.* Lk. 10. 40-42.
g *cf.* ch. 4. 4; *cf.* Mk. 8. 36; *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 32. *h* Job 38. 41; Ps. 104. 12, 17, 27; Ps. 147. 9. *i* ch. 10. 29-31; *cf.* ch. 12. 12. *j* *cf.* ch. 5. 36. *k* *cf.* Song 2. 1, 2, 12.

ion, no unsteadiness therefore, or uncertainty. The eye is the lamp of the body; not the light, but what holds and fixes the light. The light comes from elsewhere: the organ of perception does not create the light, but receives it. The *light* for us is in the Word alone: it is this that judges and makes plain; but there must be spiritual reception and, for this, *capacity* of reception, which the Lord indicates here, as it is stated by the apostle (Eph. i 18, R. V.) to be in the heart and its condition. With the heart set on things above, the eye is single and clear: God is before it, and in His light we see light. Then the whole body becomes full of light:* the hands and feet have plenty of it for work and walk. On the contrary, if the eye be evil, the very light may blind one; and when the word of God becomes this, how great may the resulting darkness become.

[2] Separate interests distract thus and divide the heart. God and mammon—that is, the treasures of earth personified and viewed as an idol,—each claim the man in ways entirely incompatible with one another. Such service, if attempted, can only be a form on one side. One master will be despised, if not hated. "He who will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God;" he who cleaves to God will despise all the world can offer. Yet how many are seeking to unite things that cannot be united! the result being only a halting inconsistency of life in which the Christian side is necessarily that which suffers eclipse.

[3] But are there not, in going through the world, necessities which demand one's attention, from which one cannot escape, and which tend to such distraction as this, even when the heart would gladly be free? Yes, surely; but there is a remedy also, which is an effectual one,—a sanctuary-refuge which faith finds ever open: it is the apprehension of a Father's care, of which His creatures preach incessantly. The birds of heaven are fed, and we are of more value: the life, indeed, of too great valne to make it a question of the food by which it is sustained; or the body, of what it may be clothed with.

[4] The human impotence that we feel has its own instruction. All one's anxiety cannot add a cubit to the stature; and how much there is in this way for which we are absolutely dependent on the will of another! why not, then, leave all things to Him to whom we have to leave so much, and who clothes the

*Not "luminous," as it has been strangely taken: for this is never the effect of the eye receiving light.

they toil not, nor do they spin; yet I say unto you, that even [l]Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. And if God so clothe the [m]grass of the field which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, will he not much more [clothe] you, O ye of [n]little faith?

5 (31–33): the good of being with God.

[5]Be not [o]careful, therefore, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or what shall we put on? for all these things the [p]nations seek; for your heavenly Father [q]knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye [r]first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

6 (34): the limit.

[6]Be not careful then as to the [s]morrow; for the morrow will be careful for itself: sufficient for the day is its own evil.

l cf. 2 Chr. 9. 1–28.
m cf. Ps. 103. 15, 16. *cf.* Is. 40. 6–8.
n ch. 8. 26.
o ver. 25.
p cf. ch. 5. 46, 47. *cf.* 1 Cor. 3. 3. *cf.* Eph. 4. 17, 18. *cf.* 1 Thess. 4. 5. *cf.* 1 Pet. 4. 3.
q ver. 8.
r cf. 1 Ki. 3. 10–13. Mk. 10. 28–30. Lk. 12. 30, 31.
s Jas. 4. 13, 14.

cf. Acts 20. 22–24; *cf.* Acts 12. 6.

perishing lilies of the field with a glory greater than Solomon's? The weakness of a man's faith is the only really sorrowful weakness, after all.

[5] And here, the Lord appeals to us, whether those who know God are to find His presence with them count for anything or not. The Gentiles, away from God, seek after these things as His people do; but we have a Father in heaven who knows our need. We have but to set the heart on His things, and let Him take the burden of ours. Seeking first His Kingdom and righteousness, all these things shall be added to us.

[6] Finally, He gives us a limit for care, which by itself would very much exclude it. How much of the burden that we carry belongs really to the morrow,—a burden not yet legitimately ours: for who can really tell what shall be on the morrow? Each day will have its own sufficient evil—not too much, for a careful hand has apportioned it: but by borrowing trouble not yet come, we not only necessarily make the burden of the day too heavy, but we cannot reckon upon divine grace for that which is not come, and bear it thus so far without assistance. Nay, we have lost Him from our thoughts in all this calculation of the unknown future which is in His hands. How often has love in the most undreamed of way, disappointed all our fears!

In all this it is not taking *thought* for the morrow that is forbidden us, but taking care, (in the full sense of *care*). The word used has been claimed in these different senses by different interpreters; but it certainly is derived from one * which suggests "division," and so "distraction" of heart; and this is completely in accordance with the warning about singleness of eye and divided service. Moreover, James, where he is speaking explicitly of the boasting of those who say, "To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain," corrects such a speech in this manner, that "ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that" (ch. iv. 13, 15). He blames only the confident assurance of the speech, and not all "taking thought for the morrow." This, in fact, should be evident: the whole current of our lives would be changed by the contrary supposition, which those who make it have immediately and seriously to modify.

5. [1] The fifth section gives us lessons of divine government, the first of which is to remember that we are subjects under it, and not rulers,—so that we must keep off the judgment-seat. To put ourselves there is already a sign that personal feelings or interests are moving us; for if it were otherwise—if God were aright before us—should we forget that He Himself was Lord in His own Kingdom? If personal interests are moving us, then we are in the worst possible

* *Μεριμνάω* from *μερίζω*.

SECTION 5. (vii. 1-14.)
Lessons of divine government.

1 (1-5): accordant dealing.

1 Judge not, that ye [t]be not judged: for with what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you. But why lookest thou at the [u]mote in thy brother's eye, and observest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me cast out the mote out of thine eye; and behold, the beam is in thine [own] eye! Thou hypocrite, cast out [v]first the beam out of thine eye, and then thou shalt see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

[t] Lk. 6. 37. Rom. 14. 4, 10, 13. 1 Cor. 4. 3–5. *cf.* 1 Cor. 5. 12. *cf.* 1 Cor. 14. 29.
[u] Lk. 6. 41, 42. *cf.* Rom. 2. 1, 21. *cf.* Gal. 6. 1. *cf.* 1 Cor. 10. 12.
[v] *cf.* ch. 5. 23, 24. *cf.* Jno. 8. 7. *cf.* 2 Chr. 28. 10.

condition to be judges, as is evident; for we are then judges in our own case: a thing that no law would permit, no sane mind tolerate.

But then we must understand what it is, this judgment which the Lord forbids. And here two things should be clear to us: first, that we are to judge of things,—of the evil and the good in either principles or acts presented to us. Here we have what touches ourselves: it is necessary that we should have our "senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. v. 14). It is true that we are to be "wise concerning that which is good and simple concerning evil" (Rom. xvi. 19); and this word "simple" (literally, pure, unmixed"*) is a warning as to the defiling nature of evil, which if realized will forbid unnecessary occupation with it, as the contrast with "wise" would lead us to understand. Yet we must know it so far as to know it to *be* evil, or we have no safeguard against it. Judgment, therefore, as to whatever lies in our path, is absolutely necessary for us; and the character of the world and the state of Christians both warn us to be watchful.

We are obliged then to judge of things as we meet them,—are responsible to the Lord, and in our own behalf, to do so; but more, we are obliged, and by the same authority, to judge persons also: "by their fruits ye shall know them,"—twice repeated here (vers. 16, 20)—is our direct warrant to do so: "do not ye judge them that are within?" asks the apostle (1 Cor. v. 12); we do and we must do it: it is, of course, not this, therefore, that the Lord is forbidding here.

The example that is given shows what is intended: to judge of things and of persons in the way of duty is to be obedient and to serve; to judge of what is not before us for judgment—to volunteer in it, or to pronounce as to motives and springs of action, to assume knowledge of that which is not open to us,—this is to take authority, not be subject to it, and indeed to assume what only belongs to the Judge of all, and is an intrusion, therefore, on His office.

This may be mere censoriousness; or passion, prejudice, self-interest may be at work with us: in any case, there is a beam in the eye, which effectually prevents a true and righteous judgment. The assumption is shown in the utterance, whether the mote in a brother's eye exists or not; and such a spirit awakes an adverse spirit: the harshness is paid back in harshness; the measure we mete to others is measured to ourselves. The language used shows that, while this is permitted in divine government, it is not the sentence of the divine Judge. In the parallel passage in Luke (vi. 38) this is plainly stated, "good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over shall men† give into your bosom."

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* *Ἀκέραιοι*, which in Matt. x. 16 and Phil. ii. 15 is translated "harmless," and which Bengel gives as "sine cornu" (Gk, from *ἀ* (*prtv.*) and *κεραία*,) "hornless." The general derivation, however, and which commends itself here, is from *ἀ* and *κεράννυμι*, to "mix," "unmixed."

† The word "men" is not actually expressed: it is "shall *they* give."

2 (6): division between holy and unclean.
3 (7-11): realized fulfilments.

2 Give not that which is [w]holy unto dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn round and [x]rend you.

3 Ask, and it shall be [y]given you; [z]seek, and ye shall find; [a]knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or [b]what man is there of you who, if his son ask bread, will give him a [c]stone? or if he ask for a fish, will give him a [d]serpent? If ye then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how [e]much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to those that ask him?

w cf. Prov. 23. 9. *cf.* Acts 13. 45, 46. *cf.* Phil. 3. 2. *cf.* Acts 8. 20-23.
x cf. Heb. 6. 7, 8. *cf.* 1 Thess. 2. 15, 16. *cf.* Acts 14. 1-5.
y Lk. 11. 9-13. ch. 21. 22. Lk. 18. 1, etc. Jno. 15. 7. *cf.* Jas. 4. 3 with Jas. 1. 5-8.

z Prov. 2. 4, 5; Prov. 8. 17; *ctr.* Is. 55. 6 with Prov. 1. 28. *a cf.* John 1. 38, 39; *ctr.* Lk. 13. 25. *b cf.* Is. 49. 15; *cf.* Heb. 12. 9, 10. *c cf.* ch. 4. 3, 4. *d cf.* 2 Cor. 2. 17. *e* Ps. 84. 11; Jas. 1. 17; *cf.* Luke 13. 15, 16.

You reap what you sow, and taste the quality of what you have been sowing; and this may be even mercy in result; for nothing is more likely to awaken in us the sense of what it is we have been doing, and of the omniscient Eye, that has been, unregarded, watching all. Thus God's mercy and His holiness are found together.

2 The revolt from harsh judgment is apt to carry us into the opposite extreme of laxity, against which the Lord now proceeds to guard us. Dogs and swine are the very images which Peter uses in his epistle to represent those who manifest their still unrenewed nature after apparent conversion: the "dog" by "turning to his own vomit again, the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (2 Pet. ii. 22). Was he not thinking of the words of his Master here?

Christendom has in fact done shamelessly what the Lord here forbids, and has proved the truth of His words in consequence. Baptism and the Lord's Supper, perverted from their original meaning and application, have been used above all to give the grossest evils tolerance in the house of God, and to make Babylon the great "a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." They have thus been trampled under foot by the profane, and Christianity been rent and mangled fearfully, as all the centuries bear witness. The "judgment of charity" is continually invoked to take darkness to be light, and credit the most barren profession with what it dares not even claim for itself. But the false judgment of laxity has here its woe upon it, as much as the false judgment of censoriousness: upon that which puts good for evil, and that which puts evil for good alike. If grace is the spring of holiness, holiness is, by this very fact, the test of grace.

3 And now the heart of God is declared as the ready and bounteous Giver, whose fullness cannot be exhausted, whose word to His people ever is, "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." There is no limit except the limit that little faith may put, or the guard on God's side (which is not limit) that the gift be good. And the Lord double clasps His exhortations with assurances that "*every one* that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." What a door is, in fact, opened for us here, and what possibility of blessing is here unfolded! How rich may we all be, if we only will be! and what free leave we have to covet the best things! And yet the apostle's words could find application in the fresh early days in which they were written: "Ye have not, because ye ask not; ye ask and have not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts!" (Jas. iv. 2, 3). Think of such an answer to the royal invitation here! what must man's heart be, that can answer so?

The appeal is backed with persuasive argument derived from affection subsisting even in earthly relationships. If we call God Father, do we expect to find

[4] (12): the practical path.

[5] (13, 14): the way and end.

[4] All things, therefore, [f] whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, so do ye also unto them: for this is the [g] law and the prophets.

[5] Enter ye in through the [h] narrow gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth unto destruc-

[f] Luke 6.31. ch. 5. 7. *ctr.* ch. 18. 23-25. *cf.* Col. 3.12-14.

[g] ch. 5. 17. Lev. 19.18.

ch. 22. 39, 40. [h] Lk. 13. 24; *cf.* Jno. 10. 9 with Mk. 10. 23-27.

Him less than such a title implies, even among men? Is not this, in fact, however real, only a feeble suggestion of what God is as Father? It necessarily would be, even if men were unfallen; but "if ye, *being evil*, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more"—there, indeed, is a calculation for faith to make—"*how much more* shall your Father which is in heaven give good gifts to them that ask Him?"

[4] The connection of the practical admonition following with this is surely of the same sort as that of what follows the prayer He has given to His disciples to one of the petitions in that prayer. If you realize this bounty of God, of which He has been speaking, you will practise bountifulness; the measure of your conduct to them will not be their actual conduct to you, but what you yourself would have desired it to be. Largeness of mind will be the result of living in the enjoyment of the King's bounty; and then, conversely, the practical conduct so inspired will react upon yourself, and help you to realize the conditions of successful prayer. A character thus formed will enable one to feel more the character of Him to whom we thus draw nigh. We understand Him as we are assimilated to Him; and faith strengthens itself thus by that which it has itself developed.

But, moreover, "this is the law and the prophets." The new dispensation falls into the same line, as has been already said, with all that has been before it. The same God has been all through aiming at the same results; and while with each step of progress the means used may vary, the end is continually kept in sight and steadily approaches. The righteousness which the law had in view grace has brought in, and yet law and grace are contrasts.

[5] This section closes with a solemn exhortation to "enter in through the *strait* gate," as the only way leading to life, and alas, found by few. The many would then (and still will) enter by another and wide gate, and throng a broad way, but a way leading to destruction and not to life. The words are figurative, of course, and the Lord does not further explain them here in any direct way. He leaves them as He does many other things, to awaken thought. There have, in fact, been very different thoughts about them: not, as to what they refer, in the mention of a gate and of a way, for the Lord speaks plainly of the way to life and the way to destruction; and these things are plain enough; but the gate, the way, are not themselves explained. We have but the description,—a "strait" gate and a "narrow" way, with few travelers, set in opposition to a "wide" gate, and a "broad" way, and many crowding them. We are left to ask what is this straitness, and what does it imply? Hard terms and difficult to comply with, with an uncertainty, on this account, of perseverance to the end? Surely not; although many have so taken it. The Lord once uses the first of these expressions in the Gospel of Luke, where He is answering one of those questions with which we so often perplex ourselves: "then said one unto Him, Lord, are there few that be saved?" which the Lord answers with a home-thrust at the questioner himself, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate," to which He adds also that "many would seek to enter in and would not be able" (Luke xiii. 24). But He bases this upon something else than the straitness of the gate: the difficulty, or rather, the impossibility of entrance is only found "when once the Master of the house is risen up and has shut to the door;" it was a *shut* gate that was to be dreaded, not a *strait* one. Thus the exhortation: be urgent to enter in while there is time.

Here in Matthew, there is no exhortation to strive, but simply to enter in

tion, and [i]many there are that enter through it; because narrow is the gate and straitened is the way that leadeth unto life, and [j]few there are that find it.

SECTION 6. (vii. 15–20.)
False prophets.

Beware of [k]false prophets, such as come to you in sheep's clothing, but within are ravening wolves. By

[i] *cf.* Lk. 13. 23, 24. *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 19.
[j] *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 26. *cf.* Lk. 12. 32. *ctr.* Rev. 7. 9.
[k] Deut. 13. 1-5. *cf.* Rev. 13. 11-17 with Rev. 19. 20; Jer. 5. 30, 31; Mi. 3. 5-7; Mk. 13. 22; *cf.* 1 Tim. 4. 1, etc.

there, and by no other gate. "Few there be that find it:" the mass go by a different road. It is not here the door being shut, but men mistaking which it is: the broad way of destruction being taken for God's narrow way of life.

This makes the picture of that broad way exceedingly solemn. Many have, no doubt, the thought of its representing the way of vice and open irreligion as opposed to the way of holiness; but closer consideration will convince us that it is not so. For no one expects, however careless he may be about it, the way of sin to lead heavenward. Whereas the Lord plainly intimates this to be what the writer of Proverbs speaks of—"a way that *seemeth right* unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (xiv. 12). The question is of *finding* the way of life. Hence the solemn warning to beware of false prophets which follows thereupon, men who would lead those listening to them upon the broad way of death.

"Few there be that find it." The great company of heavenward wayfarers, as they would consider themselves, are thronging another road, congratulating themselves upon the number and respectability of their companions. As they said in the days in which these words were uttered: "Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed on Him? but this people who know not the law, are cursed."

It is plain that the Lord affirmed Himself to be the door and the way. "I am the door of the sheep: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John x. 9). Again, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John xiv. 6). Again, if they asked about the works that they should do, He answered: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent" (vi. 29). Thus, if there are not *two* ways to life, (and He says there are not,) then the narrow way is Christ Himself. If the "gate" and the "door" are not different, it is still Christ who is represented by the gate. And then men miss the way of life, not because the terms are hard or He so unapproachable, but because men, glorifying themselves as good moralists, refuse the gracious Saviour of sinners, and seek out other ways. "They being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God; for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. x. 3, 4).

The gate is "strait," because here is indeed an absolute condition: "no man cometh unto the Father but by Me." Self-righteousness must come down; Christ must be the absolute and complete Saviour, which He alone can be: too strict conditions for multitudes to submit to. The crowds do not yet "come to Him that they may have life" (John v. 40). Yet grace itself can make no other terms, and we shall find, as we pass on here but a little way, that these are in fact the terms which exclude many of those who even call Him Lord, but who have never known Him.

6. There follows now a warning about false prophets, which is in very plain connection with that about the different roads which men were taking to reach a common end. This is intensified by the fact that, wherever the true Voice speaks, there will come the false voice after it, its mocking echo; like Jannes and Jambres opposing by imitation, putting on the dress of the sheep, but as a lure, over the evil heart within. The fruit would manifest them, but we must remember that this is not necessarily immoral conduct, in which the sheep's

their [t]fruits shall ye know them: do men gather clusters of grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? So every [m]good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but the [n]worthless tree bringeth forth bad fruit. A good tree [o]cannot bear bad fruit, nor a worthless tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is [p]cut down and cast into the fire. By their fruits, then, surely ye shall know them.

SECTION 7. (vii. 21-29).

The complete disciple.

1 (21-23): barrenness and true knowledge.

[1]Not every one who [q]saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. [r]Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not [s]prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out [t]demons, and in thy name done many [u]works of power? and then will I avow unto them, I [v]never knew you: [w]depart from me, ye who work lawlessness.

2 (24-27): dependence, true and false.

[2]Every one, therefore, who heareth these words of mine and [z]doeth them, shall be likened unto a [y]prudent man, who built his house upon the [z]rock; and the [a]rain descended, and the streams came, and the winds blew, and fell upon that house; and it fell not, for it was founded upon the rock. And every one that heareth

t ch. 12. 33. ver. 20. Lk. 6. 43, 44. *cf.* 1 Tim. 5. 24, 25. *cf.* Jas. 3. 11, 12.
m *cf.* 1 John 3. 7. *cf.* Gal. 5. 22, 23.
n *cf.* Gal. 5. 19-21.
o *cf.* Jno. 3. 6. *cf.* 1 Jno. 3. 9. *cf.* Phil. 1. 11.
p ch. 3. 10. Jno. 15. 2, 6. *cf.* ch. 25. 41-46.
q Lk. 6. 46. Is. 29. 13. Ezek. 33. 31. *cf.* 2 Tim. 3. 5. *cf.* Jude 4.
r *cf.* ch. 25. 11, 12. *cf.* ch. 22. 14.
s *cf.* Jno. 11. 50-52. *cf.* 1 Cor. 9. 27. *cf.* 1 Cor. 13. 2.
t *cf.* Lk. 10. 17-20.
u *cf.* Heb. 6. 5. *v* ch. 25. 12; Lk. 13. 25-30; *cfr.* Jno. 10. 14. *w* ch. 25. 41; *cf.* Rev. 20. 11, 14. *x* Lk. 6. 47-49; Jas. 1. 22-25; Jas. 2. 14-26; *cf.* ch. 23. 3, 4. *y* Prov. 22. 3; *cf.* Heb. 11. 7. *z* *cf.* Is. 28. 16, 17; *cf.* ch. 16. 18; *cf.* 1 Cor. 3. 11. *a* *cf.* Ps. 32. 6; *cf.* Gen. 7. 11-23; *cf.* Rom. 8. 1; *cf.* Jno. 5. 24; *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8.

clothing would no longer remain, but rather their doctrines tested by experience, as when men looking for grapes find nothing but at most the mockery of these.* Satan, when coming in as an angel of light, does not send out open evil-doers to commend his doctrines, while on the other hand an evil life may dishonor the preacher of substantial truth. But a true and needy soul, testing for itself the fruit of what is spoken, will assuredly find that the truth has its own witness to the heart and conscience, such as nothing but the truth can have. Here, above all, the Lord's words apply, that a good tree cannot bring forth bad fruit.

7. [1]We have now pressed what the complete disciple is in contrast with the mere barren professor, and the man who does not in fact build upon the rock. The time surely comes when the reality under all appearances will be made evident, and nothing will stand but what is real. Empty profession will not do: the saying, "Lord, Lord," is not necessarily subjection to Him. Prophesying, casting out demons, doing miracles, are no decisive proofs of true discipleship. For this there must be living acquaintance with Himself, that true knowledge without which, after all, the life will be lawless.

[2]The second illustration exhibits the true dependence of the soul on Him where He is known, in contrast with the false dependences which betray men to their ruin. In both cases we have pictured the builder of a house—the place of his affections and his rest, but above all, as it is viewed here, his shelter and refuge from the storm. Now for the stability of a house the foundation is the matter of first moment. If the foundation is not firm, no matter how solidly

*"Ακανθαι, or ἄκανθα, is the general name for all kinds of thorns, of which the most common bears small black berries not unlike grapes, while the flower of the τριβόλοι may be compared with the fig." (*Quoted in Lange's Commentary.*)

these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a [b]foolish man, who built his house upon the [c]sand. And the rain descended, and the streams came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and [d]great was the fall of it.

3 (28, 29): manifestation to the heart.

[3]And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these words, the multitudes were [e]astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as one having [f]authority, and not as their scribes.

[b] *cf.* Prov. 1. 22–32. *cf.* Lk. 12. 16–21.
[c] *cf.* Is. 64. 6. *cf.* Rom. 10. 3.
[d] *cf.* Rom. 3. 20. *cf.* Prov. 29. 1. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 9. *cf.* ch. 8. 12.
[e] ch. 13. 54. Mk. 1. 22; Lk. 4. 32.
[f] *cf.* ch. 5. 22, 28, 32, 39, 44; Jno. 7. 46; *cf.* ch. 23. 1–33.

the house is built: it will go with the foundation. Christ and His words are here the rock that abides; all else, whatever be its nature, is but sand. He who puts His sayings livingly into practice shall build a house that will endure the storm. None else and nothing else will: while the fair weather lasts it is quite possible that this last may look better than the rock-set one, and the man who trusts it enjoy a passing triumph. Too soon! and when the storm shall come, too late to remedy it.

[3] No wonder that the multitudes were astonished; no wonder that they found this teaching different from the strange conceits, the externalism and traditionalism of the scribes. It was a Voice from another sphere than that of earth, and the strange authority that was in it suited it yet how well! Nothing else could have suited it: any other tone would have been the renunciation of His whole mission. This claim of authority demanded the miracles that accompanied it; and yet, on the other hand, rested itself not even upon these, but above all on the manifest holiness and love and truth which commanded mind, heart, conscience into His presence, compelling the whole man to reverence; where, at least, the *man* remained to recognize and answer such a claim.

Div. 3.

The Kingdom thus announced, and its principles declared, we have now in detail the signs that manifest the King. These are not, and could not be, mere works of power, but such as bear the stamp of divinity upon them, the evidence of whence this power is derived. Power alone might accredit what was evil—a thing most necessary to be remembered in the present day: "whose coming is according to the working of Satan, in *all power* and signs and lying wonders" (2 Thess. ii. 9), is said of Antichrist. But the power manifest now in Israel was displayed in goodness and holiness and truth, and in connection with that which appealed (as just now said) to the whole moral nature. The Lord refused the faith which was built but upon miracles (John ii. 23–25), and reproved the craving for them among the people with the words, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe" (John iv. 48). Miracles were not with the Lord the foundation of anything, but what flowed naturally out of what He was, and from the intervention of God in behalf of a sin-ruined world. They testified to Christ in this way as the One whom nature owned and served, but who, therefore, was above it, and could not be debtor to it for His authentication. They were in place as they put Him in His place, and with all else served and worshiped Him.

The characters manifested in them were apart from this. They were *His* characters. They were impressed upon them as *His* acts,—were part of His living energy in its operation. And thus they had their inner significance,—as "signs:" they went with all else that He did to declare Him, and did so, acting in a sphere beyond what was merely human, where dull eyes saw better what was in all spheres the same. Faith was at all times in Christ Himself, the Son of the Father, wherever seen—"beheld His glory, the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

We are now to see Him in this manifestation of Himself, but to see, alas, that this manifestation did not of necessity bring men to His feet. On the contrary,

DIVISION 3. (Chap. viii.–xii.)

The Manifestation of the King; which manifests also the people's heart towards Him.

SUBDIVISION 1. (chap. viii.–ix. 26.)

Divine power in constant grace.

SECTION 1. (chap. viii. 1–17.)

His fore-known place.

1 (1-4): touching the leper, as present in Israel: the Son of God.

1 AND when he [g] had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And behold, a [h] leper came to [him] and worshiped him, saying, Lord, [i] if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And he stretched forth his hand and [j] touched him, saying, I will: be thou cleansed. And [k] immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

g ch. 5. 1. *ctr.* Ex. 32. 15-29 with Rom. 8. 3. *cf.* Jno. 6. 38, 39.
h Mk. 1. 40-45. Lk. 5. 12-15. Lev. 13. 1-46. 2 Ki. 5. 1, etc. *cf.* Is. 1. 6. *cf.* Rom. 3. 10-19.
i *cf.* Mk. 9. 22, 23. *ctr.* Jno. 5. 6, 7. *cf.* 1 Tim. 2. 4.
j ch. 20. 34. *cf.* Lk. 15. 20.
ctr. Nu. 5. 2; *ctr.* Nu. 19. 11; *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 21. *k cf.* Lk. 18. 14;

we are to find Him rejected by His people long taught to anticipate His coming as Messiah as the crown of all their blessings. The more He shows and proves His claim to be this, only the more decisively is He rejected; until grace can no more utter itself, and He turns in spirit from them to own relationship with those only who are doers of His Father's will. If the national refusal of Him is not yet complete, it is in sight; and the next division shows us anticipatively the Kingdom in its present Gentile form, and the New Testament "mysteries" begin to be unrolled to us.

SUBD. 1.

The signs themselves occupy the first subdivision; after which, as fully manifested, He sends His messengers through the cities of Israel to proclaim the Kingdom and do the works that confirm their mission; after which we find a remnant separated from the rest, who harden themselves in unbelief and impenitence.

Sec. 1.

In the first section, one of those dispensational pictures is presented to us such as we have already had in the second chapter. There it was impossible not to see in the Gentile magi coming up to worship a King of the Jews unknown in Jerusalem, the forecast of what was to come. In the present section after the leper has been healed, and sent in testimony to the priests, that they may themselves certify the divine power which is being displayed among them, the faith of a Gentile is declared by the Lord to be greater than any He has found in Israel. And thereupon He announces the coming in of the Gentiles into the Kingdom of God, while the sons of the Kingdom are cast out. Here we are left in no uncertainty, then, as to the larger meaning of what is before us. But the significance is not ended here: for in the healing of Peter's mother-in-law we find Him healing by touch again as in the leper, Himself present therefore, while in the case of the centurion's servant He heals at a distance, as in the present time. The touch assures us that here we have Him once more present as when He returns to Israel at a future time; while the healing of the sick of all kinds, with the reference to His human sympathy in the quotation from Isaiah, leads us out into a wider scene beyond. We seem to have Him thus in four different characters: as Son of God in the case of the leper; as Son of Abraham, in that of the centurion; as Israel's Messiah; and as Son of man. He fills in all this His predicted place.

[1] The cure of leprosy seems to have been unknown in Israel. It was a condition that only God could reach. On this account it was the fitting type of the incurable nature of sin, and a fitting case with which to begin the Lord's manifestation of Himself to Israel. We have seen that He could not take the Kingdom, except as the Son of God; and this was the character in which He was

And Jesus saith unto him, See thou [t]tell no one; but go, show thyself to the [m]priest, and offer the [n]gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

2 (5–13): healing by His word as absent, where there is faith: the Son of Abraham.

2 And [o]when he had entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion beseeching him and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home [p]paralytic, grievously tormented. He saith unto him, *I* will [q]come and heal him. But the centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not [r]fit that thou shouldest enter under my roof; but [s]speak a word only, and my servant shall be healed. For *I* also am a man under [t]authority, having soldiers under me, and I say to this one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. And when Jesus heard it, he

cf. Lk. 24. 28. *r ctr.* Lk. 7. 4, 5; *cf.* Lk. 5. 8. *s cf.* 2 Ki. 5. 9; *cf.* 2 Ki. 20. 4, 5; Ps. 147. 15; Ps. 107. 20. *t cf.* Mk. 1. 27; *cf.* Lk. 9. 1.

l cf. ch. 9. 30 with Jno. 4. 48. *ctr.* Mk. 5. 19, 20.
m Lev. 14. 1-3. *cf.* Lk. 17. 14. *cf.* Rom. 8. 33, 34.
n Lev. 14. 4-32. Deut. 24. 8. *cf.* Rom. 3. 21 with ch. 5. 17.
o Lk. 7. 1-10.
p Lk. 5. 18. *cf.* Rom. 5. 6. *cf.* Rom. 8. 3. *cf.* Is. 40. 29.
q ctr. Jno. 4. 47-54.

first of all rejected by the leaders of the people. Here He cures by a touch, which would have defiled another, and sends the healed man to the priest that he may certify the cure. But there is no response from this quarter, to which He appeals, as it were, aloue, bidding the man tell it to no other. The clamor of a crowd would not have helped such au appeal, which would better be heard in the conscience as a case quietly submitted for their decision. But there is no response: Israel is dumb until her demon is cast out, and then only will she be a true witness to her glorious King.

2 But here it is that the Gentile comes in, with a faith not found in Israel; and if the contrast with the case of the leper is plain, it is the more striking that in fact they occurred at different times* and are brought together for an evident purpose. Moreover Luke, whose Gospel is the only one that has this story besides Matthew, while giving details omitted by the latter, omits on his part the assurance to the believing Gentile of sitting down in the Kingdom of heaven, and the warning to the Jew of sons of the Kingdom being cast out, which the Jewish Gospel records. Humbling all this was to the pride of those to whom it was addressed; and because humbling, most needful, — the proud must be abased. On the other hand with the centurion there is the most thorough humility. He is not fit for Christ to come under his roof, but in this already we see the faith that animates him. As self is behind the back, the vision becomes unclouded, and thus he realizes in Him One whom all things serve. Yet Himself is come to serve, and to serve such as have no worthiness— no fitness but in their need. Let Him speak the word then: every thing will do His bidding. He, the soldier, a man *under* authority, has yet his subordinates, the agents of his will, and knows how promptly his commands are executed. So, with a word, his servant shall be healed.

The experience of the Lord's delight has in it yet what gives rise to much grave question. *Why* should there be faith outside of Israel greater than any that could be found in Israel? Israel had every advantage in this respect that could have been given her. Do privileges neglected and misused tend to blight even the true faith that exists in the midst of an easy profession? When we speak approvingly of a "child-like" faith, do we not seem to mean that the faith of a man does not fulfil the promise of the child? that hardly it can be expected it should do so? If so, this surely cannot argue that a longer acquaintance with Christ will be unfavorable to development, or that there is inherent a

*This can be seen by a comparison of the connections in the other gospels, where notes of time are given. The healing of the centurion's servant occurred after the sermon on the mount (see Luke vii. 1,) but that of the leper earlier, so that its introduction here is parenthetical. Mark evidently gives in general the historical order, while Matthew and Luke arrange and adapt for their purposes.

[u] marveled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great [v] faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, that [w] many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down * with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the [x] sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer [y] darkness: *there* shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, [z] Go thy way: as thou hast believed, be it to thee. And his servant was healed in [a] that hour.

3 (14, 15): touching again as returned to Israel: Messiah.

3 And [b] when Jesus had come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother lying sick of a [c] fever. And he [d] touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she rose up, and [e] ministered to him.

u *ctr.* Mark 6. 6. *cf.* Rom. 4. 20.
v *cf.* Jno. 20. 29. *cf.* Heb. 11. 1. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 8, 9.
w Lk. 13. 28–30. *cf.* Lk. 14. 21, 24. *cf.* Is. 60. 3.
x ch. 21. 43. *cf.* Acts 13. 40, 41, 46–48. *cf.* Rom. 9. 6.
y ch. 13. 42, 50. ch. 22. 13. ch. 25. 30, 41, 46.

* Literally "recline," as at table in the East.

Jude 13. *z* Mk. 10. 52. *a* Jno. 4. 52, 53; *cf.* Jno. 5. 24. *b* Mk. 1. 29-31; Lk. 4. 38, 39. *c* Jno. 4. 52; Acts 28. 8; *cf.* Deut. 28. 22; *cf.* Rom. 6. 23. *d* ver. 3. *e* Lk. 8. 2, 3; *cf.* Rom. 6. 22; *cf.* Acts 16. 14, 15.

principle of decay in faith that affects this: and if not, what else can it be that does so but the breath of the outside air, the world-atmosphere that is unfavorable to such an exotic as faith is? Yet "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith!"

Without meaning to excuse it in this way, it cannot surely be doubted that the atmosphere of what may be truly called a "*Christian world*" is more detrimental to development than that of a *heathen* world would be; and that because a Christian world stands as the very ideal of compromise, and compromise has in it as a first element disloyalty to Christ and to His word. Here you are faced, not with what is openly nor even intentionally hostile to Christ,—what would put you on your guard, and rouse up in you all your power of resistance; no, you find in it truth owned, but not taken very seriously; you are to follow it, but not be too extreme about it. And how naturally we grow up just to the stature, morally or spiritually as even mentally, of the company we keep! how we read Scripture itself with such a traditional interpretation put upon it as is in this way acquired, until we lose capacity for taking it simply and straightforwardly, as it would necessarily appear to the faith of a child, or of one outside the current rendering.

Who can doubt that the large and miscellaneous Christendom about us also, like the Pharisaic, Sadducean, Herodian Judaism of our Lord's time, is the greatest hindrance to true faith; and that the gospel is rendered so powerless as it is to-day, by the dead weight upon it of barren profession and the truth unfollowed and unfelt? The witnesses *for* Christ are just those who may be most terribly *against* Him, and who, however little they may mean it, can never be merely negative or neutral in their testimony.

I think we can scarcely help such an application of our Lord's words as to the simple faith of the Gentile centurion in the midst of formal, ritualistic hollow-hearted Judaism. But how great a thing to give refreshment to the heart of Christ as this man did! And by it His soul looks out anticipatively to those gathering multitudes who from opposite quarters should come to sit down at the glad feast of welcome with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of heaven:—then, when "sons of the Kingdom," the claimants now of title to that for which they had no heart, would be cast into the outer darkness, whence God the Light would be withdrawn, into the awful unavailing weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Here the Seed of Abraham is very clearly revealed.

3 The third miracle here, as may be seen by the account of it in both Mark

4 (16, 17): healing all the sick: the Son of man.

1 (viii. 18-27): Absolute Master; 1 (18-22): claiming absolute obedience,

[4] And when the [f]evening was come, they brought unto him many possessed by [g]demons; and he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all that were sick: so that it might be [h]fulfilled which was spoken through Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself [i]took our infirmities and bare our diseases.

[f] Mk. 1. 32-34. Lk. 4. 40, 41.
[g] Mk. 5. 1, 2, etc. cf. 2 Cor. 4. 4.
[h] cf. ch. 1. 22, etc. Is. 53. 4.
[i] 1 Pet. 2. 24. 2 Cor. 5. 21.

SECTION 2. (Chap. viii. 18-ix. 8.)

The various deliverances.

1. [1] Now, [j]when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he commanded to depart unto the other side. And one, a scribe, came and said unto him, Teacher, I will

[j] cf. Lk. 14. 25, 26.

and Luke, is again out of the order of time, and in fact took place before the cleansing of the leper. It must, therefore, be inserted in this place for a purpose, and we have already glanced at its significance in this respect. The Lord in this case once more heals by touch,—is Himself, therefore, personally present where He heals. Natural relationship also is owned, as we see in "Peter's wife's mother," and even in its being in the house, the place of relationship. No doubt, such references will be thought by some too minute and trivial to find meaning in them; but the mistake is in supposing anything in Scripture to have that character. We shall find elsewhere just such things with similar meaning and in important connections (xiii. 1, 36). By and by the Lord will thus come back (the fullness of the Gentiles having been brought in) into the sphere of His old relationships, to bring in healing for Israel of a deeper kind. The fever of the old life will then be subdued by His presence: He will say to the tumult of human passion, "Peace," and it shall be still; and Israel will arise in the strength of a new devotedness, to minister unto Him. That the scene here is a picture of this must be judged by its fitness to represent it and by the connection with all that goes before and follows. So judged, it seems to answer well to such a thought.

[4] For Israel's restoration will, it is certain, bring souls from every part, tormented with Satan's tyranny to Him who has been her Deliverer; and the casting out of Satan will bring in the blessing of those millennial times, while the sympathizing pity of which Isaiah speaks, and which marks Him as true Son of man, will remove the results of sin of whatever character. The principle here will not allow of blessing limited to Israel, as in fact the Lord never did so limit it; and thus the widest, fullest out-flow may be indicated here.

This sketch, then, as a sort of title of all that follows, may well show us the Lord filling all His predicted place: Son of God, Seed of Abraham, Israel's Messiah, Son of man. Mere picture it is not, but a display of personal characters that are found in Him, and this comes naturally in the first place, as the foundation of all else. The characters of the deliverance He brings come next, and in place as suited, and then, briefly, what is exceptional in Matthew, but needed for the full display of what He is, the presence of God is shown to be open to man, and His grace welcomes freely, the restrictions of the law set aside: the new wine is to be put into new bottles.

Sec. 2.

The various features of the deliverance are now, then, briefly but sufficiently shown to us. We begin with what is more external, and end with what is deepest and most personal, the heart of the whole matter. Circumstances are in His hands; the power of the enemy is prostrate before Him; sins are remitted, and the helpless and impotent one rises up in strength: such is the power and such the grace of our Redeemer. And yet, beyond this there is blessing for which all this is but the necessary preparation. To be with God: that is the complete and innermost joy of all; without which all else would be but vanity, and the soul's hunger wholly unappeased.

1. We begin with the first lesson first. Creation is in His hand: He has

[k] follow thee whithersoever thou mayest go. And Jesus saith unto him, Foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven roosting-places; but the Son of man hath not where to [l] lay his head. And another of the disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and [m] bury my father. But Jesus saith unto him, Follow me, and leave the [n] dead to bury their own dead.

k Lk. 9. 57, 58. cf. Jno. 13. 37, 38. l cf. Lk. 2. 7. cf. Lk. 9. 53. m Lk. 9. 59, 60. cf. Gen. 11. 31, 32 with Acts 7. 4. n cf. Eph. 2. 1.

cf. ch. 10. 37.

made it and He is Lord of it; full of disorder as it may appear and is, the rod of power has not slipped out of His hand: faith's triumph is in owning Him amid what is real disorder, compelling even this to work out His purposes. So in the beginning of such a record of faith as we have in the catalogue of witnesses in the epistle to the Hebrews, the first thing of all is this, that "by faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." Thus the scene of all our trials is in its whole framework and constitution His before whom faith walks. Whatever may be for the moment in the front, behind it rise the everlasting hills founded by divine strength, and bearing testimony to immutable faithfulness. The frost has riven them; the torrents have swept their shattered fragments into the valleys below; they seem to be the prey of every destructive agency which has license to work its will upon their passive forms. Yet the Hand that made them at first is still unseen raising them and sustaining them, while their very dust, spread out over the lower lands, is maintaining these also, and renewing their surface by its ministry. Death and destruction are in the hands of the God of resurrection; amid all the waste is nothing wasted; death ministers to life, and life springs out of it.

And here is the Master of all, in meekest surrender to circumstances in a path where all seems against Him, yet maintaining His absolute title untouched, as He must, or all were given up. Where would we be, if He resigned His authority?

As to circumstances, the foxes in their holes and the birds of heaven are better provided; and this He urges to test the zeal of a too-ready disciple. On the other hand, if one would put even a father's claim before His own, He in the plainest manner refuses this. From Luke we learn that the Lord had called this man to follow Him, but there seemed no duty which could take precedence of burying a dead father. The man who is called is not fully ready; the one not called is more than ready. We may be sure that the state of enthusiasm in the one case was genuine enough; and he was one of a class not given to it in regard to Christ. The enthusiasm was all well, but there was in it a dangerous self-confidence, like that which we find in Simon Peter afterwards, and which we know betrayed him into a terrible fall. It was not that sincerity or love was wanting in him, but the consciousness of his own weakness: and this is why so much of early promise is apt to fail, and backwardness succeed, it may be, to confident energy. When Christ's call is heard distinctly in the soul, then it is as dangerous to be reckoning up difficulties, as in mere enthusiasm to lose sight of them. It is for Him who calls us to the path to reckon with the difficulties, and faith for the path also is found as we travel it. Assuredly, if we have not faith for the Lord's path, we shall not find it *for any other*.

In the second case, therefore, the Lord insists upon promptitude of devotedness. "Let the dead bury their dead" is distinct exhortation to lay aside every thing that would, under the idea of duty itself, delay compliance with what He has called to. Even Abraham suffered his father to lead in obedience to a word addressed to himself; and so we read that "Terah *took* Abraham his son, . . . and went forth with them . . . to go into the land of Canaan." What came of it? "And they came unto Haran, and *dwelt there*." While Terah was alive, they never got to the place for which they had set out: "Terah died in Haran."

In the case before us it was only a dead father needing to be buried; and here

2 (23-27): and able to ensure as absolute security of those embarked with Him

[2] And when he had entered into a ship, his disciples followed him. And behold, there arose a great [o]tempest in the sea, so that the ship was covered with the waves; but *he* was [p]asleep. And they came to him and awoke him, saying, Lord, [q]save: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of [r]little faith? Then he arose, and [s]rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great [t]calm. But the men marveled, saying, [u]What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?

2 (viii. 28-ix. 1): Deliverance from the enemy.

2. And [v]when he had come to the other side, into the country of the Gadarenes, there met him two [w]possessed by demons, coming out of the tombs, exceeding dangerous, so that no one could pass that way. And, behold, they cried out, saying, [x]What have we to do with thee, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to [y]torment us before the time? Now there was, a good way off from them, a herd of many swine feeding. And the

o Mk. 4. 37-41. Lk.8.22-25.
p *cf.* Is.26.3.
q *cf.* ch. 14. 30, 31. Ps. 107. 28.
r *cf.* ch. 17. 20. *cf.* Mk. 16. 17, 18.
s Lk.4.39,41. *cf.* Ps. 65.7.
t *cf.* Ps.89.9. Ps. 107. 29.
u *cf.* Mk. 1. 27. *cf.* Lk.5.26.
v Mk. 5. 1-20. Lk.8.26-40.
w ch. 17. 14-18. *cf.*Eph.2.2.
x *cf.* Acts 1. 25. *ctr.* Lk.5.8. *cf.* Acts 24. 25.
y *cf.* ch. 25. 41 with Rev. 19. 20.

the living disciple, the messenger of life, was not to be detained in the region of death, from the delivery of his gracious message. Let the dead attend to death, is the Lord's word; and, although the two deaths spoken of here are not the same, yet there is simple and evident connection between them.

If the Lord maintain His authority as Master, it is soon made manifest that Master He is, and able to ensure the safety of those that are with Him. On the stormy sea, He is asleep until, roused by their unbelieving appeal to Him,—and how much unbelief is expressed in our prayers!—He hushes with a word the winds and the sea. The application of this is familiar to us all, and made by every one: a pregnant example of how naturally these histories speak to us all of spiritual realities in the way of exhortation and comfort,—how truly they are meant to do so.

And the unbelief of disciples, how constantly has it been repeated since, and how often does the Lord shame us by coming in for us as here. How much is it all in contrast with that faith of the centurion, which we have so lately seen winning the Lord's wonderment, as here their unbelief does. This restless sea of Galilee, so often lashed with storms, is indeed a vivid picture of the world of our pilgrimage, much vexed, soon traversed; and we find it more than once again in this way, and human feet taught to walk in peace upon it, not without His help who Himself walked there and still walks, for faith, in the like fashion.

2. They come to the other side of the sea, only to find there the enemy's power rampant. Two possessed by demons, coming out of the tombs, stop the way against all comers. Matthew does not go into detail here, as Mark and Luke do. His object is just to show the power of the Lord as manifested in these various deliverances, and details have not for him the same importance. The ghastly horror of the dwelling of these living men in the abodes of death, and their insane fury before which men quailed, are given to put in contrast the absolute surrender of their prey by those who held them captive, when the Lord appears. *Men*, blinded of Satan, may dispute His right, not they. Striking it is that they give Him at once the title, which men deny Him, of Son of God, and recognize Him as their future Judge. But they plead that the day of judgment has not come, and can He be come to torment them before the time?

The story of the swine that follows seems as if it were designed to make manifest the reality of these demoniac possessions, than which nothing can be plainer, indeed, in the whole account of them. The demons, speaking with the

demons besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, send us away into the [z]herd of swine. And he said unto them, Go. And when they had come out, they went into the swine; and, behold, the whole herd [a]rushed down the steep into the sea, and died in the waters. And they that fed them [b]fled, and went away into the city, and told every thing, and what had befallen those possessed by demons. And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus; and, when they saw him, they besought [him] to [c]depart out of their coasts. And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came unto his [d]own city.

3 (ix. 2-8): "Arise and walk."

3. And, behold, they [e]brought to him a paralytic, laid upon a bed. And, when Jesus saw their [f]faith, he said unto the paralytic, Son,* be of good courage, thy sins are forgiven. And, behold, certain of the [g]scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Why do *ye* think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to [h]say, Thy sins are forgiven, or to say, Rise up and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath [i]authority upon earth to forgive sins (then saith he unto the paralytic),

*Literally, "Child," τέκνον.

z *cf.* Lk. 15. 15, 16 with ch. 7. 6.

a *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 19 with Phil. 3. 19.

b *ctr.* Lk. 8. 35. *cf.* Jno. 6. 67-69.

c ver. 29. *ctr.* Acts 16. 9. *cf.* Lk. 4. 29.

d ch. 4. 13. ch. 11. 23.

e Mk. 2. 1-12. Lk. 5. 17-26.

f ver. 28. ch. 8. 10.

g vers. 11, 34. ch. 12. 2.

h ch. 8. 8. Mk. 1. 27. *cf.* Rom. 10. 8-13.

i *cf.* ch. 21. 23-27. *cf.* Acts 4. 7-12.

voice of the possessed, recognize the Lord (always, as already said, with intelligence as to His Person), address and are addressed by Him, their testimony to Him being necessarily refused. They ask permission to go into the herd of swine, ("*all* the demons," according to Mark, taking part in this) and are granted it; and thereupon the whole herd of swine (about 2,000 in number) rush down the steep bank into the sea, and perish in the waters.

Matthew, again, gives us no after-picture of these delivered men. He is occupied with the deliverance itself, the manifestation of the glorious King, and along with this but with the shadow that creeps after it, His rejection, as already showing itself, at the hands of an unbelieving and impenitent people. They are more afraid of the Deliverer than of the awful power from which He would have delivered them, and imitate, in effect, the prayer of the demons themselves, in begging Him to depart out of their coasts. The Lord accepts His rejection and returns across the lake to His own city.

3. The jarring elements have owned Him; the power of the enemy has been broken before Him; the strong man's captives are delivered: we are next to see what is the stronghold of the enemy yield, and man's condition met in its innermost reality; the burden of guilt is lifted from the soul, and the paralysis which sin induces removed in consequence. We are surely to take in widest, fullest application what is given us here, just as we do instinctively, and not the less surely, the hushing of the storm upon the lake. All through these divine narratives, that which is manifested to the senses is but a parable of spiritual realities. The external facts are, none the less as that, a veil of the unseen, a manifestation in flesh of the divine. The miracles are not wonders merely but signs,—through and through significant.

The miracle that follows here is again taken out of the order of time, but all the more should it be manifest, with such purpose as we have already seen. Morally and spiritually it is here perfectly in its place; and again we find features that are dwelt upon in the other gospels omitted in order to bring into prominence the central fact. They bring to the Lord a paralytic, lying upon a bed; and He, seeing their faith, goes beyond the apparent need, and down to

[j] Arise and take up thy bed, and go unto thy house. And he arose and departed to his house. And, when the multitudes saw [it,] they [k] feared, and glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

j Jno. 5. 8,9. *cf.* 1 Thess. 1. 9. *cf.* Acts 14. 8–10.
k *cf.* Acts 2. 43. *cf.* Acts 5. 11.

SECTION 3. (Chap. ix. 9–26.)

Opening the presence of God to men.

1 (9-13): The call of grace.

1. And, as Jesus [l] passed on from thence, he saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the tax-office; and he saith unto him, [m] Follow me. And he rose up and followed

l Mk. 2. 13–17. Lk. 5. 27–32.
m ch. 4. 18–22.

that in which all the distress that is in the world has its root: "He said unto the paralytic, Son, be of good courage, thy sins are forgiven thee."

He who spoke knew perfectly the state of soul to which He was addressing Himself, and the weight of his sins, which might hinder even bodily healing, was certainly pressing upon him. But the miracle of healing which was to follow was thus also to be a witness to that which in itself the senses could not realize or confirm. The sufferer was to have the assurance of this; but also the most unsympathetic and unbelieving there were to find openly the seal of divine power put upon His claim to forgive sins. As Son of man He claims it: but that was itself a Messianic title, and (as we have seen) implied in itself One higher than man; even while it assured them of the tender truth of that humanity. But why the need of assuring any one that He who was in their midst as man really *was* that? It was in fact the sweetest assurance, as it could only have arisen out of the most absolute conviction of His highest glory.

Even the accusation of Him in their thoughts, by the proof given of His knowledge of them, is made to turn to their conviction; and if none could forgive sins but God alone—and they were surely right in that—*what*, then, was He who could thus so completely prove His authority to do this?

How sweet and wonderful the assurance of sins forgiven, His word certifying it after this manner! Not that it was new that God met men in His grace upon the simple confession of their sins to Him. The psalmist had found it so, and published his experience for the help of others (Ps. xxxii.), and in this way David had described, as the apostle says, "the blessedness of the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works" (Rom. iv. 6). This had been thickly overlaid with ritualistic practices and rabbinical prescriptions, and could scarcely have been understood by any with the simplicity which it appears to us to have. But who could have undertaken to apply this grace on God's part definitely to the individual, to pronounce him forgiven in this authoritative manner? Thus we see that all this is part of the manifestation of the Deliverer. It is not the *doctrine* of forgiveness that is declared, nor would this have aroused opposition in the form we find it here, but that the *Son of man* had authority to forgive sins.

The order of blessing is, however, pregnant with meaning. First, "thy sins be forgiven thee," and then "arise and walk." The load of unforgiven sin is too great for any one to lift and yet find power to walk in a way acceptable to God. Pardon assured from Him, the soul arises with the strength found in this new joy in Him. All is changed for it. The path is a path with Him, not to find Him. It is a path given of Him who is now known. Thus the limbs just now paralyzed with guilt and fear receive, as in a moment, life and energy. The impracticable legal principle, "do and live," has given way to the evangelical one, "live and do." Here is a change of order how significant: "arise and walk" speaks first of the wondrous gift bestowed; then, as the flush and vigor of health are felt, the "walk" becomes but prolonged ecstasy. Salvation in its fullness is not found till this is attained.

Sec. 3.

That which follows here is in extension of such thoughts as these, and fully assures us that we are to find this spiritual meaning in what has been

him. And it came to pass, as he "sat* [at meat] in the house, that, behold, many tax-gatherers and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples. And, when the °Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, ᵖWhy eateth your teacher with tax-gatherers and sinners? But, when he heard it, he said, They that are ᵍwhole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have ʳmercy, and not sacrifice: for I came not to ˢcall righteous persons but sinners.

n Lk. 14.12-14. Lk. 15. 1,2.
o ver. 3. Lk. 7. 39.
p ch. 11. 19. cf. ver. 14.
q cf. Jno. 9. 39-41. cf. Lk. 18.9-14.
r Hos. 6. 6. Mi. 6. 6-8. ch. 12. 7. cf. 1 Sa. 15. 22.
s Lk. 19. 10. Rom. 5. 8; 1 Tim. 1. 15.

* *Gk.*, "reclined."

before us. For now the Lord openly declares His grace and justifies it, telling men too that it cannot be used to patch up the legal system, nor will the spirit of it be confined within the Mosaic ordinances. Come for the need of men He the Representative (as He has proved Himself) of God on earth, freely receives sinners, and makes faith welcome to draw upon Him at all times. Thus the presence of God is opened to men. They may refuse, but they are not refused. While, though at present only to be told in parables for the wise, the truth of Israel's—and indeed *man's*—condition is that he is dead, and needing life, and Christ's mission needs must be, therefore, to raise the dead. This completes His manifestation, therefore; while the mystery in which it ends shows how little faith there is anywhere to receive it, and prepares us for the full rejection of Him by the mass, which is soon to appear.

1. The call of the taxgatherer* follows immediately the cure of the paralytic; and this in the order of time, as the words show. The challenge of His authority and the grace He is showing, only makes the assertion of it more imperative, as it would have made it weakness to give way. All was in question now; and now, therefore, He will make as plain as possible what is in His heart. "Tax-gatherers and sinners" are with them in natural association, and that association He never disclaims. But who are *not* sinners? If He refuse men on that ground He must refuse all; Matthew the tax-gatherer, called into the circle of His immediate followers, is to be the witness to all men of His grace for all.

The feast at which we find Him directly afterwards, took place in fact after His return from Gadara, as we see in Mark and Luke. The account of the healing of the paralytic and of Matthew's call are historically parenthetical. The special purpose is maintained all through.

We learn from Luke that Matthew made Him this feast. He knew well what would be that to Him, and showed it by the company he gathered. These persons had, at least, the consciousness of what they were, and grace could not offend them. At the very entrance upon fellowship with God we find it in learning to be with Him as to what we are, and the light of the first day of new creation breaks upon a barren, restless and shoreless sea. The weariness and distress and remorse of sin are witnesses for God which cannot be bribed, though they may not be listened to; while self-righteousness is lulled to sleep by its own monotone, and dreams of peace where there is no peace.

Yet the light troubles these sleepers and angers them; and so we find in the questioning of the Pharisees now. They could not be indifferent to what might seem so little to concern them as where One in whom, at any rate, they did not

* "Publican," borrowed from the the Latin, is not the proper rendering. This was the name of those who paid into the "public" treasury the fixed sum for which they farmed the taxes of special provinces. Under these, who generally lived at Rome, were overseers of districts, and under these again the actual collectors, who being in close relationship to the people, themselves in general grossly extortionate, and a sign of subjection to the hated Roman government, were of all men, it would seem, most bitterly hated by the people; and especially, as Edersheim observes, the custom-house official, such as Matthew was. His being a Jew, as many were, would naturally be the climax of his wickedness in the eyes of the people.

2 (14-17): the annulling of law.

2. Then come to him the disciples of John, saying, [t]Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? And Jesus said unto them, Can the sons of the bride-chamber mourn, as long as the [u]bridegroom is with them? But there will come days when the bridegroom shall be [v]taken from them, and then shall they fast. No one putteth a [w]patch of unfulled cloth upon an [x]old garment: for that which filleth it up taketh from the garment, and a [y]worse rent is made.

t Mk. 2. 18-22. Lk.5.33-39. *cf.* Joel 1.14.
u Jno. 3. 29. *cf.* Jno. 17. 12.
v *cf.* Jno.16. 6, 20, 22.
w *cf.* Lk.15. 22. *cf.* Gal.2.16 -21.
x *cf.* Is.64.6. *cf.* Phil. 3. 4-8; *cf.* Heb. 8. 13.
y *cf.* Gal. 3. 3, 15-17, 25-29; *cf.* Gal. 4. 9-11, 21-31; *cf.* Gal. 5. 2-4; *cf.* Gal. 6. 12-15.

believe, could find His company. They might have remembered, but chose rather to forget, that the Baptist also, than whom there could be no sterner preacher of righteousness, had found response to his message in just such a class (ch. xxi. 32). But the Lord answers, (what indeed they had not ventured to address to Him), that He was a physician; did not, of course, come after them, who were well enough, but to the sick ones; and that they had never learnt, what they needed much to know, that God had said in the Scriptures which they acknowledged, that He would have mercy, rather than sacrifice. It was little mercy indeed that rabbinism showed to these tax-gatherers, as, indeed, "sick" enough, as a class, they were, and needing the physician. But here was One who was the perfect expression of divine mercy, not merely receiving, but actively going out after the objects of it; One who came not to call the righteous but sinners. If so, the chief of sinners would have chief title. But divine love, and the wondrous power of it, are strange to the heart of the legalist at any time; and then Christ must be strange.

2. It is not only the Pharisee who has question as to the Lord's ways. The disciples of John find Him at variance with their master. But there is a notable difference between them: the disciples of John come straight to the Lord with their question, instead of assailing His followers with it: they do not find fault, but inquire. Moreover they may ask, why His disciples fast not: they could not put such a question as to the Lord Himself. Still what they needed was to know better the glory of Him whom they were addressing, as they needed also to realize the essentially secondary character of what had all its value from its being an expression simply of the spirit of the man who used it. To make it an iron or universal rule would be to degrade it really,—to make it a form from which the life has departed.

Christ had come to His own: and what would be the spirit of those who realized this? The Bridegroom had come to the bride, and should the children of the bride-chamber—the invited guests—clothe themselves with the array of mourners? That would be impossible to one who knew Him aright; but there would be time enough for fasting, when the Bridegroom would be taken from them; this, of course, implying His rejection: in those days fasting would be perfectly in place.

But the Lord goes beyond this to speak of the change of dispensation that was now at hand, and for which they must be prepared: a change which would be still more complete and radical; not a mere patch upon an old garment. The garment of legal righteousness was in fact wearing out, and man being exhibited as the prophet had declared him, "*all* his righteousnesses but as filthy rags" (Isa. lxiv. 6). What good in patching up what was so utterly gone? Between the new evangelical righteousness and the old legal one there can be only the strife of contradictory principles. There can be no fusion here: with all such attempts the rent is only made worse.

Nor only this: the spirit of the gospel, the free, expansive power of Christianity, cannot be put into the old skins of ceremonial Judaism. Here both the wine will be lost, and the skins will perish. And this has been proved experi-

Nor do they put [z]new wine into old [wine-] skins, else the skins [a]burst, and the wine is poured out, and the skins perish; but they put new wine into [b]fresh skins, and both are preserved together.

3 (18-26): faith realized and the dead raised.

3. While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a [c]certain ruler and worshiped him, saying, My daughter hath by this time [d]died; but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live. And Jesus arose and followed him, and [so did] his disciples. And, behold, a woman who had had an [e]issue of blood twelve years, came behind and [f]touched the border of his garment: for she said within herself, If I can touch but

15; Jno. 11. 4-15; *cf.* Eph. 2. 1. *e* Lev. 15. 19-27; *cf.* ch. 15. 19, 20. *f cf.* ch. 8. 3;

z cf. Jno. 2. 3, 9, 10. *cf.* Acts 2. 13-18. *cf.* Acts 13. 52. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 8.

a cf. ch. 13. 5, 6, 20, 21. *cf.* Heb. 6. 4-6, 9.

b cf. Jno. 3. 5-8. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 17.

c Mk. 5. 22-43. Lk. 8. 41-56.

d Lk. 7. 11-

cf. Rom. 4. 5.

mentally: the thing has happened; ritualism of every kind is just such an experiment, with the result that we have neither Judaism nor Christianity left. The living organism can only clothe itself with the tissues woven by the life itself.

3. This is already parable, and a parabolic story follows it. We have a picture of things which could not as yet be spoken out: two incidents connected together, which, different as they are, throw light upon one another, and are found, in dispensational and moral application, to continue and complete the lessons which the Lord has been enforcing. The perfect fitness of the whole here, internally, and to the place in which it stands, vouches for the reality of the meaning which we attribute to it.

The truth has been coming more and more into recognition, that Israel, whom the Lord came to heal, is in fact but a corpse, like the ruler's daughter. We have not the name of this ruler in Matthew; but in the two other Gospels which narrate the miracle, we find that his name was Jairus or Jair (Judg. x. 3, *see notes*), the "enlightener," * a name quite suited to those "fathers" of that generation of Israel which had, alas, become a nation of the dead, fathers through whom the enlightening Word has come down to us.

If such then be Israel's condition, we see why the principle of law must be given up, as just now declared. Law is not for the dead, but for the living: for the dead it is useless. But "if there had been a law given which could have given *life*, verily, *righteousness* should have been by the law" (Gal. iii. 21). These are the two things—life and righteousness—which we find in the Lord's words just now, and in the narrative here, connected together.

If the principle of law, then, be given up, and grace be shown by the mere goodness of God, the apostle's question becomes an unanswerable one: "Is He the God of the Jews only? is He not also of the Gentiles?" (Rom. iii. 29, 30,)—will such goodness confine itself within the limits of a feeble and scattered people, or much rather go out to meet the universal need?

So it is, then, that while the Lord is on His way to fulfil a special declared purpose, faith in the woman with the issue claims Him, and finds answer to its claim. Again we have not in Matthew the same detail as in either Mark or Luke, and for the same reason as was noticed before, that it is with the signs which manifest Him that Matthew is occupied. Her disease, an issue of blood, is given, which was not merely a slow sapping of the life away, but, according to the law, defiling also by contact (Lev. xv. 25-27): so that here again (as with the leper) there is uncleanness, the typical reminder of the effect of sin.

But in this case it is not the Lord who touches, it is faith that touches, not Him, but rather His garment. It is the activity of faith that is here seen, of

* This is one of the reasons assigned for a mythical interpretation of the history by Strauss and others, the symbolic meaning of the name; but they might for the same reason make all Scripture mythical; while all that shows inspiration shuts out myth.

his garment, I shall be healed. But Jesus turned and saw her, and said, Daughter, be of good [g]courage: thy faith hath healed thee. And the woman was healed from that hour. And when Jesus came to the ruler's house, and saw the flute-players and the crowd making a [h]noise, he said, Give place; for the maid is not dead, but [i]sleepeth. And they derided him. But when the crowd had been put forth, he went in and [j]took her hand, and the maid arose. And the [k]fame of it went out into all that land.

g ver. 2. Mk. 10. 49. Lk. 7. 50. Lk. 17. 19.

h *cf.* 2 Chro. 35. 25. *cf.* Jno. 11. 33.
i Jno. 11. 11–14. *cf.* 1 Thess. 4. 13, 14.
j ch. 8. 3, 15. *cf.* Rom. 6. 10 with Eph. 2. 5, 6.
k ch. 4. 24.

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chap. ix. 27–x.)

The King's Messengers.

SECTION 1. (chap. ix. 27–34.)

The King indeed.

l ch. 20. 30–34. *cf.* 2 Pet. 1. 9.
m *cf.* ch. 15. 22. Lk. 18. 38, 39.

1 (ix. 27–31): light given.

1 AND as Jesus passed on from thence, two [l]blind men followed him, crying out and saying, [m]Son of David, have mercy on us. And when he had come into the

course, and that lays hold, not of Himself personally, but of His robe—His character as displayed in His life down here. None the less certainly is virtue found in Him; and He pauses on His way to ratify her title to the healing and impute it to her faith. In principle it is the grace to the Gentiles during the present delay of Israel's blessing.

But He reaches the house at last, and finds the mourners busy, who mock at the quiet words which speak of the power of resurrection in His hands. But the unbelieving crowd being put forth, the maid arises: and so, in spite of her desperate condition and the unbelief that mocks at Him, will Israel, when He appears and at His word to her, arise. It is a figure we have often in the prophets, of the revival of the nation in the last days. (Isa. xxvi. 19; Ezek. xxxvii; Dan. xii. 2; Hos. vi. 2.)

Under this dispensational application we may without difficulty discover an individual one, in which the intertwining of the two miracles, if not presenting so clear a meaning, is yet significant. In Jairus' daughter we have man's state in its full reality discovered. The Lord is here the Life-giver: the dead hears the voice of the Son of God and lives. This is the divine side of salvation, and here man is passive and recipient merely. But there is another side, and the woman with the issue seems clearly to represent this. Her faith applies to the Saviour for its need, and the issue of blood is staunched. These are the two sides of a common history, to adjust which fully may transcend our power: and yet each has its place. It is Mark, however, especially, who brings out this individual view, as Matthew the dispensational; but the double application, with the place in which we find these in the different Gospels, confirms the whole.

The signs which manifest the King are here complete. We see how truly He is no merely human King, but One "marked out Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by resurrection of the dead" (Rom. i. 4, *Gk.*) And such the fore-ordained King of Israel was to be. He is now, therefore, ready to be proclaimed as this over the land; and accordingly we find provision made for this proclamation now by the commission given to the twelve apostles.

SUBD. 2. *Sec. 1.*

[1] In all that we have hitherto had before us, the Lord has not once yet been owned as Son of David; nor, since the day of the magi, as the King. The question is first as to His higher title. The Father's voice is the first to own Him as the Son of God; and this is surely in due order. Afterwards, and as taught of Him, the Baptist does so (John i. 33, 34); but it is not Matthew who records

house, the blind men came unto him. And Jesus saith unto them, [n]Believe ye that I am able to do this? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. Then [o]touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly [p]charged them, saying, Take heed, let no one know it. But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that land.

2 (32-34): and speech, with deliverance from the enemy: yet rejected.

[2]And as they were going out, behold, they brought a [q]dumb man to him, [r]possessed by a demon. And, when the [s]demon was cast out, the dumb spake. And

n Mk. 9. 23, 24. *cf.* Heb.11. 6.
o ch. 8. 3. Mk. 8. 22-26. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 21.
p ch. 8. 4. Mk. 7. 24. Mk. 1. 45.
q ch. 12. 22, 23. Lk. 11. 14. Is. 32. 4. Is. 35. 6. *cf.* Rom.10.
9, 10. *r cf.* Lk. 13. 16. *s cf.* Mk. 9. 25-27; *cf.* Acts 26. 18.

this, nor have we heard it yet in Matthew upon the lips of men. The devils own it and tremble. Men call Him Master (i.e. Teacher) and Lord: and this He accepts, taking naturally and as of full right the highest place. Of Himself He ordinarily speaks as Son of man, a title which prophecy had given Him indeed, but with some indistinctness, and which claimed more than might at first sight appear: for why should one who was simply and only that, assume what is universal among men, as if it were *unique in Him?* The grace and tenderness of the title are what strike us most.

With all this, we have not heard Him here as yet openly claim to be the Christ or King. He seems to wait for human lips to pronounce this, and indeed pointedly asks the disciples the question at a later time, who do they say that He, the Son of man is? And when Peter answers, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," He refers this acknowledgment of Him to the Father's revelation of Him (ch. xvi. 16). In none of the synoptics does such a confession come before this; but in John, Andrew owns Him at the beginning to be Messias (John i. 41), and to the woman of Samaria (iv. 25, 26) He openly declares Himself. Still, upon the whole, we may say, He waits for faith to acknowledge Him, and always, in connection with the Kingdom, His divine Sonship is the first question. The manifestation of Himself in this way is now complete, and now we have the testimony, humble enough though it be, to the King of Israel.

Two* blind men appeal to Him on His way from the ruler's house, as Son of David: a testimony confirmed by Him with the miracle by which they receive their sight, when once it is seen that it is faith that speaks in it. Blindness indeed was upon Israel, for which there could be no remedy until in the sense of it they should cry to Him. Here, as with the leper, He heals by touch, and forbids them to make it known: an injunction which could not have been, as at a later time, because of His rejection by the people, for as yet the decisive rejection had not come—He was Himself going to send out a testimony far and wide among them. One would say that it must have been because the testimony to the Son of David was peculiarly liable to abuse among a carnal people who could be attracted by miracles and the display of power, while their hearts were far away from God. For this reason the acknowledgment of the Son of God must come before that of the Son of David. The latter title indeed He Himself never uses, though He could not but own it, where as here true faith expressed itself in it.

[2] Linked directly with this miracle we have another. A dumb demoniac is brought to Him, and when the demon is cast out, the dumb speaks. Here again surely, we have Israel's miserable enslavement to the prince of this world, which they showed in their rejection of the true King. The dumb will speak,

*This "two" of testimony to Him is comparatively common in Matthew: as in the case of the two demoniacs previously, where Mark and Luke have only one; and the two other blind men at Jericho, still in the other Gospels only one.

the multitudes marveled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel. But the Pharisees said, He [t]casteth out demons by the prince of the demons.

SECTION 2. (chap. ix. 35–x.)

His Messengers.

1 (ix. 35–x. 15): the authority given.

1 And Jesus [u]went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the [v]gospel of the kingdom, and healing all sickness and all infirmity. And, seeing the multitudes, he was moved with [w]compassion about them, because they were harassed and [x]cast away, as [y]sheep that have no shepherd. Then saith he to his disciples: The [z]harvest indeed is great, but the [a]laborers are few: beseech, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that [b]he would thrust forth laborers into his harvest.

And when he had called to him his [c]twelve disciples, he gave them [d]authority over unclean spirits to cast them out, and to [e]heal all disease and all infirmity.

38. *a* cf. Jno. 6. 9; cf. Acts 1. 15; cf. 2 Tim. 4. 9-11, 16. *b* 2 Thess. 3. 1; cf. 1 Tim. 1. 12; cf. 2 Cor. 3. 5, 6. *c* Mk. 3. 13-19; Lk. 6. 12-16. *d* Mk. 6. 7-12; Lk. 9. 1-6. *e* ver. 8; cf. ch. 17. 16, 19-21.

t ch. 12. 24, etc. Mk. 3. 22, etc. Lk. 11. 15, etc.
u ch. 4. 23. Mk. 6. 6. Lk. 13. 22. Acts 10. 38.
v ch. 4. 17. ch. 13. 19. ch. 24. 14.
w ch. 14. 14. Mk. 6. 34.
x ch. 10. 6. Ezek. 34. 1-6. Zech. 10. 2.
y Nu. 27. 17. 1 Ki. 22. 17. ch. 2. 6. Ps. 80. 1. Ezek. 34. 12-19. Jno. 10. 12-14.
z Lk. 10. 2. Jno. 4. 35-

only when the demon is cast out, and then it will be indeed to the praise of their Deliverer. But now the miracle is only provocative of blasphemy from the Pharisees, which they repeat more boldly at an after-time, and which then brings out the Lord's warning words as to blasphemy against the Spirit. It was a sign of hearts that were hardening themselves against all that divine love could do.

But it was yet to be seen whether Israel as a whole were going with such leaders. The pity of the Lord is only roused by it now to more importunate appeal to the people to whom He had come,—*His* people and the sheep of His pasture,—to listen to His voice.

Sec. 2.

The Lord refuses, then, the leaders of the people as representing the people themselves. They are mere misleaders, shepherds not feeding the flock, but injuring and rending them. As He goes up and down Galilee, constantly bearing testimony of the Kingdom at hand, and doing every where the mighty deeds which were the demonstration of the power of God already among them to bring it in, His heart is moved with the misery of their condition. Yet the sheltering wings of divine mercy were manifestly ready to be folded over them. It depended but upon themselves whether they would welcome the love that was seeking them. The abundant miracles, appealing as they did to the very senses of men, by the relief of need in every form and however desperate, could not but appeal to every legitimate self-interest on man's part. And, however it might be with the nation at large, He is assured of the harvest that will reward labor in these beckoning fields. But the laborers, where are they? He bids His disciples, therefore, supplicate the Lord of the harvest that He would thrust forth laborers into His harvest—not merely "send" but impel them to go out; and then He turns these praying ones into laborers themselves. He gives them authority to do the works that He is doing—power over the whole power of the enemy and every outward consequence of sin, and sends them out to testify thus by word and work of the Kingdom drawing nigh.

The messengers thus sent out are themselves significant. We are familiar with their manifest deficiencies from a mere human point of view, deficiencies which made them only the more dependent upon that divine power which worked in them and through them. The apostle of the Gentiles afterwards, himself a man of very different up-bringing from these Galilean fishermen, and

Now the [f] names of the twelve apostles are these: first, [g] Simon, who is called Peter, and [h] Andrew his brother; [i] James, the [son] of Zebedee, and [j] John his brother; [k] Philip and [l] Bartholomew; [m] Thomas and [n] Matthew the taxgatherer; [o] James, the [son] of Alphæus and [p] Thaddæus;* [q] Simon the Cananæan and [r] Judas Iscariot, who also delivered him up.

These twelve Jesus [s] sent away when he had charged them, saying, Go not away to any way of the [t] nations,

* Or, "Lebbæus, who was surnamed Thaddæus."

[f] Acts 1. 13. Mk. 3. 13-19. Lk. 6. 12-16.
[g] Jno. 1. 41, 42. ch. 16. 16-19. ch. 26. 69-75. Jno. 21. 15-19. 1 Pet. 1. 1.
[h] Jno. 1. 40. ch. 4. 18. Mk. 13. 3.
[i] ch. 4. 21. Mk. 10. 35-42; Acts 12. 2.
[j] Lk. 9. 49-56; Jno. 13. 23; Jno. 21. 24; 2 Jno. 1.
[k] Jno. 1. 43, 44, 46; Jno. 6. 5-7; Jno. 12. 21; Jno. 14. 8, 9.
[l] *cf.* Jno. 1. 45-51; *cf.* Jno. 21. 2.
[m] Jno. 11. 16; Jno. 14. 5-7; Jno. 20. 24-29; Jno. 21. 2.
[n] ch. 9. 9; Lk. 5. 27-32.
[o] Mk. 15. 40; ch. 13. 55; Acts 12. 17.
[p] *cf.* Jno. 14. 22; *cf.* Jude 1; Lk. 6. 16.
[q] Lk. 6. 15.
[r] Jno. 6. 70, 71; Jno. 12. 4-6; Jno. 13. 2, 26-29; Lk. 22. 47, 48; Acts 1. 16-20, 25.
[s] *cf.* ch. 28; 16-20; *ctr.* 1 Cor. 15. 8-10.
[t] *cf.* Acts 1. 8.

just when addressing himself to the vain and luxurious inhabitants of a wealthy pagan city, expressly stripped himself of any natural advantages that he might have, and "came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto them the testimony of God." And this was expressly that his "speech and his preaching might not be with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Cor. ii. 1, 4). It is certain that these rude instruments, as we should call them, yet moulded and energized by the Spirit of God, did a work such as has never since been done. Doubtless there was a fitness so given to them, transcending all the power of the schools to accomplish since. It is remarkable, with but an exception or two, how little we know of this or of them. In the Gospels themselves we much more often have them held up as warnings to us, than for our imitation. In the Acts, where most we should expect to find them, only one or two—fewer than in the Gospels—are at all prominent. And even these soon pass from our sight, and scarcely even a fragment of tradition of them remains. The "Acts" are, as has been well said, rather the acts of the Spirit of God, sovereignly using any that He will, than the "Acts of the Apostles," as they have come without warrant to be called; though Paul the apostle—not any of the twelve—is the principal figure in the latter half of the book. It is to the Spirit of God, evidently, that we are commended, and to practise the same utter dependence upon Him as they did.

No doubt, what we have of these earliest workmen should reveal to us much more than we have ever found in it. Even their names and their number should be significant. The Lord Himself connects them with the twelve tribes of Israel, over whom they are to rule in the day of the earth's "regeneration" (ch. xix. 28). And on the foundations of the heavenly city their names are also found (Rev. xxi. 14). Twelve is indeed the number of manifest divine rule, as we have often seen, and these twelve names should have lessons for us in such connection. Their ministry is specially connected with the Kingdom, as Paul's is eminently with the Church (Col. i. 25*), and thus, probably, it is that their names are on the foundations of the city of God, which is the centre of divine government in that scene to which the book of Revelation carries us forward.

But we have here only a preparatory testimony addressed to Israel, and the names are in pairs, six pairs, as they were sent out by the Lord, two and two, not disregarding apparently in this the natural or spiritual ties which link men together. Simon and Andrew are brothers, and Simon had been led by his brother to Jesus: here there were both links. The sons of Zebedee come next. Then Philip and Bartholomew, the latter supposed to be that Nathanael, whom Philip had brought to the Lord. Beyond this we are not able to go in realizing such connection, and as to the names and persons had better leave what can be said of them to develop naturally from the history.

* Where read "minister"—not "*a* minister"—"to *complete* the word of God."

and into any city of the [u]Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the [v]lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The [w]kingdom of heaven is at hand. [x]Heal the infirm, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons: [y]freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither [z]gold nor silver nor brass for your girdles, nor wallet for the way, nor two coats, nor shoes, nor staff: for the [a]laborer is worthy of his sustenance. But into whatever city or village ye enter, inquire who in it is [b]worthy, and there abide until ye go forth. And when ye enter into a house, salute it; and if the house be worthy, let your [c]peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hearken to your words, as ye depart out of that house or city, [d]shake off the dust of your feet. Verily, I say unto you, It shall be more [e]tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

2 (x. 16-23): a witness in the face of enemies.

[2] Behold, *I* send you forth, as [f]sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore prudent as [g]serpents, and guileless as [h]doves. But [i]beware of men: for they will de-

u *cf.* Jno. 4. 9. *ctr.* Acts 8. 5.
v ch. 9. 36. *cf.* Gal. 2. 7-9. *ctr.* 1 Cor. 1. 24-29.
w ch. 3. 2. ch. 4. 17.
x ver. 1. *cf.* 2 Cor. 12. 12.
y *cf.* 1 Pet. 4. 10.
z Lk. 10. 4. *cf.* Lk. 22. 35-38. *cf.* Acts 3. 6. *cf.* 3 Jno. 7, 8.
a Lk. 10. 7. *cf.* 1 Cor. 9. 4-15. *cf.* 1 Tim. 5. 18.
b *cf.* Acts 16. 15.
c Lk. 10. 5-8.
d Lk. 10. 10-12. *cf.* Acts 13. 15.
e ch. 11. 22.
f Lk. 10. 3. *ctr.* ch. 7. 15.
g *cf.* 2 Cor. 12. 16; *cf.* Col. 4. 5. h *cf.* Phil. 2. 14-16; *cf.* 1 Pet. 3. 13, 14. i *cf.* 2 Tim. 4. 14, 15.

Here they are upon a special mission to the "lost sheep"—already that—"of the house of Israel," and are strictly forbidden to go whether to Gentiles or Samaritans. It is not at all an evangelization after the Christian pattern, and the directions given to them are only in part applicable to the present time. They were to proclaim the Kingdom as at hand, accompanying the proclamation with what the apostle calls, because of their connection with this, the "powers of the age" (not "world") "to come" (Heb. vi. 5). Sickness and death would yield to them; leprosy, (which had to do also with defilement before God,) and the power of the enemy: blessings to be scattered far and wide, as manifesting the grace which they themselves also had received. They were to take no supply, whether of money or clothing, as not going out into a heathen world but among those professedly owning God, with whose message they came, and as under the guardianship of the King their Master,—having a right, therefore, to expect the sustenance due to His laborers. Referring to this afterwards, and appealing to their own experience of how this expectation had been fulfilled to them, He distinctly recalls this commandment, in view of their going out into the world after His rejection (Luke xxii. 35, 36); and the laborers of an after-time are distinctly commended by the apostle, "because that for His Name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles" (3 John 7). But now the King's messengers were not to go as strangers: in every city or village those worthy were to be sought out, and with these they were to abide till they went forth from the city. The "peace" with which they greeted a house, made good, if it were worthy, with substantial blessing, would more than recompense all that they might receive. If it were not worthy, then the blessing would be as if it were not uttered. Finally, against house or city that would not receive them, they were to shake off the dust of their feet, as not willing to carry with them the least particle of that which belonged to those in hostility to their Lord. It would be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment than for that city.

[2] Invitation and warning thus went hand in hand; but the Lord does not hide from the disciples the fact that the nation, nay, the world, would reject Him, and therefore them. He puts this indeed fully before them, to prepare them for it and encourage them in view of it: He was sending them forth as

liver you up to *j* councils,* and scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before *k* princes and kings on my account, for a witness to them and to the nations. But when they deliver you up, be not *l* careful how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak: for it is not ye that are the speakers, but the *m* Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you. But *n* brother shall deliver up brother to death, and father, child; and children shall rise up against parents and put them to death; and ye shall be *o* hated of all on account of my name; but he that *p* endureth to the end, *he* shall be saved. But *q* when they persecute you in one† city, flee to another: for, verily I say unto you, ye shall not have *r* completed the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come.

j Mk. 13. 9. *cf.* Jno. 16. 2.
cf. Acts 4. 5–7.
cf. Acts 5. 17–40.
k cf. Acts 12. 1.
cf. 2 Tim. 4. 16.
l Mk. 13. 11–13. Lk. 12. 11, 12. Lk. 21. 14–19. *cf.* Ex. 4. 10–12.
m cf. 1 Cor. 2. 1–5.
n cf. Jno. 7. 5. *cf.* vers. 35, 36.
o cf. Jno. 16. 1–3.
p ch. 24. 13.
q cf. Acts 14. 6.
r cf. ch. 24. 4–30.

* "Sanhedrim." † this.

sheep in the midst of wolves,—a hopeless thing to natural expectation; they were therefore to be as prudent—or wary—as serpents, but pure as doves,—without the serpent's deceit. Men would deliver them up to councils, or sanhedrim, spiritual courts connected with the synagogues themselves. But beyond this they would bring them before governors and kings, the secular Gentile powers, as we see in the Lord's case, necessarily under a different charge, and with a malice which He would turn to a testimony in the highest places and to the Gentiles at large, whom grace was content to seek even in such a manner. Paul's case illustrates all this fully at a later day.

But they need not be careful as to their defence at such times. They would not be left to mere unaided wisdom. As the cause of Christ the Spirit of their Father would take it up and give them words fitted. Yet the hatred of them would be so intense as to break through all natural ties, and change the strongest affections into bitterest enmity. Brother would rise against brother, father against child, children against parents: they must endure, and at the end would come deliverance. Fleeing from one city to another, they would not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man was come.

These last words make it plain that the mission of the twelve, while a mission to Israel only, and necessarily broken off by the judgment upon Jerusalem and the dispersion of the people, if not before, yet is not in the Lord's mind at an end even now. It will be taken up again under similar circumstances, but in the face of bitterer persecution, and continued until the actual coming of the Son of man from heaven and the consequent deliverance of His own at a time yet future. No doubt the Lord's words could not as yet be understood by those to whom He spoke; and they have been a cause of great perplexity to commentators, and variously interpreted by them in consequence. Had they not mostly confounded this testimony to Israel alone with the general publication of the gospel since, they would have had their perplexity increased. The occurrence of the same exhortation and encouragement with the distinct and detailed prophecy of the coming of the Son of man, in the twenty-fourth chapter, assures us as to the meaning here. Again there we are told that "he that endureth to the end shall be saved," the special troubles of the last days are put before us, and the Lord's coming at the end "with all His holy angels with Him." But even as to the meaning of this, many have gone quite astray; while the lack of understanding of the parenthetical nature of the present Christian time has necessarily confounded things which should have been kept far apart. In the Old Testament prophecy the present time of grace to the Gentiles never appears; and to this character the words of the Lord here conform. The new dispensa-

3 (x. 24-33): but before God.

3 The *disciple is not above the teacher, nor the servant above his lord. It is sufficient for the disciple that he should become as his teacher, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the *Master of the house Beelzebul, how much more those of his household? Fear them "not, therefore; for there is "nothing covered which shall not be revealed, nor hid which shall not be known. What I say to you in the darkness, "speak in the light; and what ye hear in the ear, preach upon the house-tops. And be not afraid of those that *kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but fear ye rather "him who is able to destroy both soul and body

s Lk. 6. 40. Jno. 13. 16.
t cf. Jno. 8. 48 with Acts 2. 13.
u cf. Acts 4. 13, 19, 20.
v Mk. 4. 22. Lk. 12. 2,3. *cf.* 1 Cor. 4. 5.
w cf. Acts 5. 20. *cf.* Col. 1. 23.
x cf. Is. 8. 12, 13. *cf.* Dan. 3. 16–18.
y cf. 2 Cor. 5. 11.

tion was not yet in view, and could not be while yet the testimony to Israel was going on. But this is, on this very account, not yet the place to consider what will necessarily be before us a little further on. (See chap. xiii. 35.)

3 The Lord urges now upon His disciples their necessary identification with Himself, so that they can expect no better treatment than He Himself received. If they had called the Master of the house Beelzebul,* how much more those of his household. Beelzebul means the "lord of the dwelling,"—the *Satanic* "master of the house," who made the demon-possessed his habitation. They called *Him* this who was the lawful Master, the One stronger than the strong, who set the poor captives free (xii. 29). What, then, would they call the men of His household? But then from such raving there was nothing to fear. All would one day be unveiled and brought to light; and in that confidence they might proclaim upon the house-tops whatever they had heard of Him in greatest privacy.

It was true that in their enmity to it men might kill the body: this was their limit; by doing so they would only deprive themselves of further power. The soul would survive beyond their reach. God could destroy both body and soul in hell,† and He who has this power is the One only to be feared. We cannot but remember, in view of the Lord's words here, that there was a Judas already among this little band of witnesses for Christ,—a man whose surname was "Iscariot,"‡ and who "from the beginning" was known by Him to be the

*So all the editors. Most commentators take it as a contemptuous alteration of Baalzebub, "lord of flies," the Philistine god of Ekron. Edersheim says that *zebul* means, in Rabbinic language, only the Temple, and suggests that *zibbut* may be referred to, which means "sacrificing to idols." Others take *zebul* as "dung;" but this is *scbcl*. I give what seems most satisfactory, following Lange (*Commentary on Matthew*).

† Man has spirit as well as soul, but the Lord speaks of soul here, doubtless, because it is in closest connection with the body,—which is therefore called the "psychical" (not "natural) body" (1 Cor. xv. 44),—of which it is the "life." *Psyche*, like *nephesh* in the Old Testament, is thus used for "life" and "soul." Of "spirit" there is not in Scripture a possible question; of soul there might be; but the Lord affirms here its survival also. The common thought of body and soul being the whole man has clouded the truth of immortality, as if it had to be proved from a solitary text or so, as here: and also from its making man only what the beast is, in which there is also a "living soul" (Gen. i. 30). Spirit is what is distinctive of man (1 Cor. ii. 11).

Again, when the Lord speaks of body and soul in hell, He does not speak of "killing" any more, but of "destroying,"—a word used as to "ruin" of any kind. (See, for a full discussion, my "*Facts and Theories as to a Future State.*")

‡ The surname "Iscariot" has had many interpretations: commentators in general having pretty well settled down now into the belief that it means "*Ish Kerioth*," or the "man of Kerioth." If so, he was the one Judean among the disciples, who otherwise were of Galilee; and some see much significance in this. But is it not much more probable that it is from the same root with, and akin to Issachar, "there is reward," or "hire," too near identity being naturally avoided with one of the fathers of Israel? There seems to have been a form of the word, *shacar*, from which is derived the word *eshcar* (Ezek. xxvii. 15) of similar meaning. Iscariot might mean even thus the "trafficker," more closely connected with his crime than "hireling" would be. Notice how we are reminded of this surname (which may have been given him afterwards) at the very time when he puts himself into Satan's hands for the betrayal of the Lord (Luke xxii. 3).

in hell. Are not two [z]sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father; but of you even the [a]hairs of the head are all numbered. [b]Fear not, therefore: ye are of more account than many sparrows. Every one, therefore, who shall [c]confess me before men, him will *I* also confess before my Father who is in heaven; but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will *I* also [d]deny before my Father who is in heaven.

[z] Lk.12.4-7.

[a] Lk. 21. 18. *cf.* Acts 27. 34.

[b] ver. 26. *cf.* Heb.13. 5, 6.

[c] Lk. 12. 8. Ps. 119. 46. *cf.* Rev.3.5.

[d] Lk. 12. 9. 2 Tim.2.12. *cf.* ch. 7.23.

[4] (x. 34-38): the test of discipleship.

[4] Think not that I came to send* [e]peace upon the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at [f]variance with his father, and the daughter with her mother, and the daughter-in-law with her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his household. He who loveth father or mother more

[e] Lk. 12. 49-53.

[f] Mi. 7. 6. *cf.* Jno.9.18 -23.

* *Βάλλειν* is to put on over a thing, as clothes, armor, or to put [into the mind]; but rather the former here with *ἐπὶ*,—"put peace upon the earth," "clothe the earth with peace;" "send" is too much as if the sword were His intention, whereas it is the result of the world being away from God.

traitor (John vi. 64). Solemn words of our Lord in the presence of such an one; and surely for his ears.

But He goes on to encourage them with the blessed thought of being in relation to such an one as Father, without whom not one of those sparrows which men sold two for a penny,* could fall to the ground, and whose tender care had numbered every hair of His children's heads. They were of more account, then, than many sparrows.

But they must confess Christ before men: whoso confessed Him before men He also would confess before His Father in heaven; and whoso denied Him, He also would deny before His Father—He could not now say *their* Father—in heaven. Grace never sets aside the holiness of God, but conforms us to its conditions; while divine holiness does not set aside the grace, which always receives the penitent: and the chief of the apostles furnishes us with the illustration of this.

[4] The test of true discipleship is found then in the preference of Christ to all things whatsoever else. The Prince of peace had come into the world, and yet the effect of His presence would not be to produce peace as between man and man, but on the contrary to bring out all the opposition of the heart to Him. For this they must be prepared. Variance would be introduced into families,—an effect with which the truth has been invariably reproached. Professing disciples would have to take their choice, therefore, between Himself and all else, were it father, mother, son or daughter: the inmates of a man's house would be his foes. No one would be fit to be a disciple of His who did not accept this, and take up his cross to follow Him. Here for the first time He intimates the death before Him,—the shame which He has turned to glory: a dread word now for those whom He is sending out as heralds of His Kingdom, but with all the intimation of sorrow and rejection. Humbling Himself to all that the enmity of man can do, His language is that of serenest, fullest consciousness of a title far more than royal—a *divine* title. With the world thus against Him, He putting forth no power to subdue it, nor even to shelter His people from the vindictive hatred which He predicts, He claims from all that will be His disciples the most perfect devotedness that could be shown by man. He is to be dearer than the dearest, nearer than those bound by the closest of ties. And under

* An assarion, really equal to a cent, or a halfpenny sterling.

than me is not [g]worthy of me; and he who loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he who doth not take up his [h]cross and follow after me is not worthy of me.

5 (x. 39–42) a recompense.

5 He that [i]findeth his life shall lose it, and he who hath lost his life for my sake shall find it. He that [j]receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a [k]cup of cold [water] only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

1 (1–15): Sufficiency and unity of the manifestation.

SUBDIVISION 3. (Chap. xi.)

The Separation of a Remnant.

1 (1–6): the divine accord in signs of His presence.

1. [1] AND it came to pass, when Jesus had finished commanding his twelve disciples, that he [l]passed on thence to teach and to preach in their cities. Now,

g Lk. 14. 26. *cf.* Deut. 33. 9. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 16.
h Lk. 14. 27. Lk. 9. 23. ch. 16. 24. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 10.
i ch. 16. 25. Jno. 12. 25. Mk. 8. 34, 35. *cf.* Acts 20. 24.
j ch. 18. 5. ch. 25. 40, 45. *cf.* Gal. 4. 14. *cf.* Heb. 6. 10.
k *cf.* Lk. 21. 1–4. *cf.* 1 Ki. 18. 4.
l *cf.* ch. 9. 38 with John 6. 38.

such constraint they are to follow Him as the perfect, supreme example of all that is highest to be attained: to be "worthy of Him" their whole ambition! How His glory shines out here from the depth of self-abasement.

5 He goes on to declare the recompense, connecting it with the conditions already laid down. "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he who has lost his life"—not simply as having done this, but—"*for My sake*, shall find it." This is no principle of asceticism, or anything like that: it is His love governing in the face of a hostile world. Then He identifies Himself in the fullest way with those sent forth by Him: "he that receiveth you receiveth Me, and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me." This principle He now extends beyond those He is addressing: "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward." That is, where mind and heart identify one with the prophet or the righteous man, God will identify him: the receiver of a prophet shall be blessed *with* the prophet. And divine love will forget nothing that is done for love's sake: "whosoever shall give to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

SUBD. 3.

We have now the separation of a remnant to Himself, while the mass are going on to complete rejection. This we see through all this manifestation of Himself; the more fully He is manifested, the more this rejection of Him appears: for it is just His divine glory which they refuse most utterly. But it is this also which brings out the faith of those divinely taught, the babes, conscious of their own nothingness, to whom the things of God can be declared. These are wisdom's children who justify wisdom, even in ways that seem most opposite; while the rest reject alike whatever God may please to use in the way of witness to them. In the Lord's words to those who listen to Him the coming grace begins to be more distinctly seen.

1. [1] First of all, we have brought before us the sufficiency and unity of the manifestation made. And this is emphasized in a message to the Baptist, who from Herod's prison in which he is shut up, sends by his disciples to the Lord,

when [m]John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent by his disciples, and said unto him: Art thou he that cometh, or are we to expect another? And Jesus answered and said, Go your way, and tell John the things ye hear and see. The [n]blind recover sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the

m ch. 4. 12. ch. 14. 3. *cf.* Jer. 32. 2, etc. *ctr.* Phil. 1. 12-21.
n ch. 9. 27, etc.

to ask if He is indeed the Coming One, the One they had been expecting; or were they still to look for another.

It is evident that, in some measure at least, doubt was assailing the mind of the Baptist. Indeed, with regard to such a matter as this, the smallest question unanswered is an agony. No doubt, he had expected in the One to whom he had borne witness, conduct in some way different from that which he had since heard of Him. It is generally and naturally said that he expected, as the mass of the nation certainly did, the Kingdom to be established in power which would put down all opposition, and yet here was he, the messenger to prepare His way, languishing in the power of an immoral usurper of the Kingdom that was Christ's alone. But John had proclaimed Him as the Lamb of God, and evidently the Lamb of sacrifice,—nay, as taking away the sin of the world (John i. 29). How, but by suffering and death? Must he not have understood, then, that this might involve suffering for His disciples also, even as the Lord had spoken of days to come in which the Bridegroom would be taken away from them, and that then they would fast?

Perhaps the reserve the Lord had hitherto maintained as to His Messiahship, and for which we may find reason in the carnal views held by the people as to it, may have, at least, prompted the desire that He would explicitly declare Himself. This seems the simplest account of the question put through his disciples. It was from the Lord Himself he sought the answer: and if he could not put this and that together, the Lord would know how to help him, and to have compassion on him.

The Lord answers by referring the messengers to what they heard and saw. The signs spoken of by Isaiah (xxxv. 5, 6) were being given before them: the blind were receiving sight, and the lame were walking; more than that, the lepers (whose uncleanness cast them out from man and from the house of God, and which only God could heal) were being cleansed, and the deaf heard—a blessed thing, when now there was so much to hear,—these were such things as the prophet had spoken of, to be fulfilled in Messiah's days.

But more, the dead were being raised:—the sign which marked out Christ as "Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness." * For, although prophets had done this before, yet never as the seal of such a testimony as His, that "as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son *quickeneth whom He will*" (John v. 21). Thus now there was indeed "good news" for the poor: we may say "gospel," for it is the same word; only we must understand that the gospel, as we think of it now, is a very different thing. *Then* it was that "the Son of man had power on earth to forgive sins;" *now* it is the precious "blood of Jesus Christ His Son" that "cleanseth from all sin" (1 John i. 7). The blood shed was the emphatic sign of His rejection by the world, as it is for us that by which we are brought to God. That death of His was not, therefore, yet preached; *He* was not preaching it: and though He had indeed spoken to His disciples of taking up their cross, it was only after this that He began to speak to them of His own, to the consternation of all, and to be "rebuked" by Peter for it (ch. xvi. 22). When His death came, though they had been then fully warned of it, it seemed the collapse of all their hopes; and when the women declared His resurrection, "their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not" (Luke xxiv. 11).

* Rom. i. 4: where it should read, "by resurrection of dead persons," and cannot be limited therefore to His own resurrection, as the common version is taken to mean.

deaf hear; the dead are raised, and the poor have good news preached to them:* and [o]blessed is he who shall not be stumbled by me.

2 (7-15): His witness to John, and John's witness.

2 And as these went their way, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John: [p]What went ye out into the wilderness to look upon? a [q]reed shaken with the wind? [Nay] but what went ye out to see? a man clothed in [r]soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in king's houses. But why went ye out? to see a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and [s]more than a prophet: this is he of whom it is written, [t]Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, that among those that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; but the [u]lesser one in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. But

o *cf.* Jno.12. 37. *cf.* Jno. 15. 24. *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24.
p Lk. 7. 24-30.
q *cf.* Eph. 4. 14. *cf.* Jas. 1.6-8.
r *cf.* ch. 3. 4. *cf.* 2 Ki.1.8.
s *cf.* ch.13.17. *cf.* Jno.5.35.
t Is. 40. 3. Mal. 3. 1.
u *cf.* Heb.11. 40. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 10-12. *cf.* Eph. 3.4 -10.

* *Literally*, "are evangelized."

Yet how sweet this gospel preached to them by the Son of God among them, and confirmed by the abundant signs of divine power working far and wide. "To the poor" also—poor in every sense—He proclaimed it; to "publicans and sinners," as we know: One come to seek and save the "lost"—though that is not quite what we have reached yet, and as yet He is acting as "Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers" (Rom. xv. 8). Israel's rejection of Him, without being able to destroy this as the final purpose of His love, was soon to bring about the revelation of purposes still more glorious, the display of which would be, characteristically, among sinners of the Gentiles.

The Lord adds therefore, as admonition for John, but in the gentlest terms, "And blessed is he who shall not be stumbled by Me." His reserve as to taking His title as Messiah was already the foreshadow of the blessing passing, in the meantime, from the people with whom all the Scriptures had connected it—to whom belonged "the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service, and the promises" (Rom. ix. 4)—heart-break enough for a Jew, that! And He had already spoken of "days in which the Bridegroom should be taken away from them!" Here was danger, indeed, of stumbling over the stumbling-stone. The exercise as to this John could not escape: it was forced upon him by his own circumstances. But then this new beatitude was to be his also. And every honest exercise, if it be for the time an agony, will be found in the end the travail-pain of a new beatitude.

2 But thus now it is the Lord whom we find bearing witness to John, instead of John bearing witness to Him. His own words are fulfilled, "I receive not testimony from man" (John v. 34). Right and meet it is that He should be His own sufficient witness; and blessed it is to see now how, where John had brought his own testimony into question, the Lord comes forward on his behalf. What was it that the multitudes had gone out into the wilderness to look upon? in fact it was what John was that had largely drawn them out to him. Had they been thus moved by a mere reed, to be shaken by the wind? No, spite of all seeming now, they knew better. Was it a soft luxurious man that they saw in the wilderness? It was the wrong place in which to find such. Had they not rather believed him to be a prophet? And they were not mistaken: he was that and more. For, indeed, among those merely born of women, there had not arisen a greater than this man with his strange baptism; and yet, the Lord adds emphatically, "the one comparatively little in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

He does not say, "the least," nor does the expression seem the equivalent of

from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven is [v]taken by violence and the violent seize upon it. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And, if ye will receive it, this is [w]Elias, who was to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

2 (16-24): Israel rejecting the way of righteousness and grace alike.

2. But to what, then, shall I liken this generation? It is like [x]children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their companions, saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye

[v] Lk. 16. 16. *cf.* Lk. 5. 19, 20.

[w] ch. 17. 12. Mal. 4. 5.

[x] Lk. 7. 31-35.

this; and we must first of all consider in what this greatness which the Lord ascribes to John consists, before we can properly estimate the force of His words.

Plainly, it cannot be that even the little one in the Kingdom of heaven can be greater morally than John the Baptist; but then it can hardly be thought that John himself was greater in this respect than all the men that had preceded him. That is not the point of comparison: it is in the place given to him as the predicted messenger who was to prepare the way before Messiah. Certainly spiritual greatness could not be wanting in one put in such a position; but that is another thing. "All the prophets and the law prophesied until John:" they all pointed onward to the time of which John was able to say, "It is just at hand." It was for him to change the whole character of testimony hitherto, and to sound the note of Jubilee which announced a Kingdom not of earth but of heaven, and the King Himself even at the door. And, this being his greatness, it is easy to understand that he would be in the greater position, who was in the Kingdom itself, and could say in the language of the psalmist anticipating this, "As we have heard, so have we seen, in the city of Jehovah of hosts, in the city of our God" (Ps. xlviii. 8).

The Lord's words are commonly taken indeed to refer to the Kingdom in its present Christian and parenthetic character; and no one would deny that such an application could be made. But the testimony as to this was not that given by the Baptist, nor was it yet given when these words were spoken. The Kingdom in this form only began to be spoken of, and in parabolic utterance, when once it was clear that Israel had indeed rejected Him. And that time was now close at hand, and of course foreseen by the Speaker here, but not yet made definitely plain, even to disciples. Every thing would indicate to us that the Lord is declaring the blessedness of that of which all the prophets prophesied, and which John himself had announced, and when Israel will be lifted up to a greatness, which has never yet been paralleled in all the history of that favored nation. That they then put it away from them does not in the least affect this application, which relieves all difficulties at once, and yet leaves room for another application. This must, however, as I believe, be a secondary one.

The next words of the Lord have more real difficulty than those preceding them. They have been taken in opposite ways: the "violent," who seize upon the Kingdom having been thought to refer to the opposition of the scribes and Pharisees, as if they were forcibly taking possession of it; but this is hardly possible as the meaning of the words. "Seize upon it" they could not, though they could obstruct the way of those who were seeking to enter. But their opposition compelled men to violence who would possess themselves of it. As yet, indeed, it was only preached, or presented in the person of the King, and not set up; but the adversaries and those who laid hold of it as thus proclaimed were being distinguished. Until John there had only been the prophesying of what was yet at a distance; John was in fact, if men would receive him, the Elias who was to come. Elias then had come and gone: his "days" could be spoken of as past already. So urgent was the call, then: he that had ears at all must now give ear.

2. The Lord goes on to speak of the way in which, in fact, the senseless gener-

have not beaten the breast. For John came [y] neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a demon; the Son of man came [z] eating and drinking, and they say, Behold, a glutton and a wine-bibber, a friend of taxgatherers and sinners. And wisdom is [a] justified by her children.

Then began he to [b] reproach the cities in which most of his mighty works had taken place, because they repented not. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for had the mighty works which have taken place in you, taken place in Tyre and Sidon, they would have long ago repented in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which hast been [c] raised up to heaven,* shalt be brought down to hades: for if the mighty works which have taken place in thee had taken place in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the [d] day of judgment than for thee.

3 (25-30): the revelation of the Father and the Son.

3. At [e] that time Jesus answered and said, I give thee thanks, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast [f] hid these things from wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto [g] babes. Yea, Father, for so it hath

* Others read, "shalt thou be raised up to heaven?"

y *cf.* ch. 3.4. Lk. 1. 15. Lk.5.33-35. *cf.* ch. 3. 2.
z Lk. 5. 29-32. Jno.2.1-11. Lk. 7. 36. *cf.* Jno.3.16.
a *cf.* Prov.8. 8, 9. *cf.* Jno.8.43.
b Lk. 10.13-16. ch. 10. 15. *cf.* Heb. 2. 1-4.
c *cf.* Lk. 18. 14. *cf.* Rev. 18. 7. Is. 25. 12. Is. 26. 5.
d *cf.* Jonah 3. 7, 8. ch. 10. 15. *cf.* Lk. 12. 47, 48. *cf.* ch.25.31. etc.
e Lk. 10. 21, 22.
f 1 Cor. 1.19-21, 27-31. Is. 6. 9, 10.
g Ps. 8. 2. *cf.* ch.16.17. 1 Cor. 3.18.

ation to which God had thus been speaking had treated the divine appeal that had been made to them. They were merely like children in the midst of the serious business going on around them, idling away their time in mocking the realities of life. They trifled in their pleasure, they trifled with sorrow, even with that which was upon man for his sins, and carried him away from both his pleasures and his sorrows. They would have had John dance to their piping, and Jesus and his disciples beat their breasts to their idle dirge. The ways of God never suited them; if John came in the way of righteousness and so with his call to repentance, they said he had a demon—would drive us among the tombs. If the grace of God in Christ came among them as not shunning contact, but eating and drinking even with the sinners whom it had come after to win them to the Giver of all good they knew not, then they reviled it as licentiousness, and the Saviour as fit company for those whose need had brought Him to their help. No way would suit them that divine love could take; while wisdom's children justified her in all her ways.

So then they but turned the mercies shown them into occasions of judgment and self-degradation. Tyre and Sidon would have repented, had they seen the glorious things which Chorazin and Bethsaida had beheld unmoved. Sodom would have remained to that day, if it had had the privileges of favored Capernaum. But therefore the judgment of Tyre and Sidon and of Sodom would be lighter in the day of judgment, than that of Israel's cities. Capernaum, the city of His choice, had come near to heaven by the Presence which indeed makes heaven for those that have received His grace. It would sink down under the weight of its rejection of Him to a mere abode of death and desolation.* And such it has long been, whether the identification of its site be correct or not.

3. The Lord turns from it all, to approve, spite of the sorrow that filled His heart, the Father's perfect ways. It was right to hide from the world's wise

*To *Hades*, "the unseen," the region of departed spirits; not "hell" or Gehenna.

been pleasing in thy sight. All things have been [h]delivered unto me by my Father; and no one [i]knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any one the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son may will to [j]reveal [him]. [k]Come unto me, all ye that labor and are burdened, and I will give you [l]rest. Take my [m]yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am [n]meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls: for my yoke is [o]easy, and my burden light.

h cf. Jno. 5. 27. Jno. 13. 3. Jno. 17. 2. *cf.* Heb. 2. 8.
i cf. Ex. 16. 15. *cf.* Lev. 1. 17. *cf.* Eph. 3. 19.
j Jno. 1. 14, 18. Jno. 6. 46. Jno. 17. 6, 26.
k Jno. 6. 35, 37; Jno. 1. 38, 39. *l ctr.* Is. 57. 20, 21; *cf.* Is. 30. 15; *cf.* Is. 32. 17, 18; *cf.* Rom. 5. 1.
m cf. 1 Cor. 9. 21; *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 2. *n* Jno. 13. 15; Phil. 2. 5; 1 Pet. 2. 21-23; *cf.* ch. 26. 67, 68.
o 1 Jno. 5. 3; *ctr.* Acts 15. 10.

and prudent what to babes He could reveal. This is not hiding anything from men as men, but from men that cleave to their own wisdom,—are wise enough to judge God, but not to judge themselves. In that condition it is impossible that He and they should come together. It is a first necessity that God should have His place—should *be* God; and therefore man be the puny creature that he is, a babe indeed before Him. If there be true wisdom, he will find it no hardship to take his place as this before the Lord of heaven and earth: and here is the condition of all true blessing.

Here, then, was the Son of the Father; Himself the Repository of all blessing: all things in His hand, whose very Person was to man an inscrutable mystery, before which all the pride of man must humble itself; but a mystery of grace in which as nowhere else God is revealed. The Son makes known the Father,—He, and He alone. We find here, beyond all that had been predicted as to Messiah, the glory which is not, so to speak, officially, but personally His. It passes knowledge, and yet it is for us to know: it is not God shrouded in the darkness, but the glory of the Light; inaccessible, though most accessible; an infinite fullness, in which we are filled up. Here we need but capacity to receive; emptiness in ourselves, not fullness; the "babe's" capacity to draw from and live upon Another, and to such need it is that He wills to reveal Himself, and in revealing Himself to reveal God—Lord of heaven and earth, and yet the Father, for the "babe" to call upon as such.

Practically rejected already by the people to whom He came, He appeals, then, to these needy ones wherever they may be—to those who have found the world but a weary place, in which those "laboring" after satisfaction only find, in proportion to the eagerness of search, the heavier weight of disappointment—He appeals to these to come away from this fruitless labor to Himself for rest. He will *give* rest. The responsibility of fully satisfying them shall be His own.

In this way, He is practically outside of Israel: for wants of this kind are not the birth-right privileges of the chosen nation. He, too, is more and higher than a mere King of the Jews; as His call and offer show, by the character of those invited and by the freeness of the gift, that it is not law but grace that He is declaring. But He is a King; and in submission to Him all hope for man is found. He gives rest, but not to those going on in rebellion. Seeking and following one's own will, no rest is practicable; it would be rest in sin. "Take My yoke upon you," He says, "and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

What an example for our imitation! When God raised up a leader for His people of old, to bring them out of Egypt and into the land, He gave them one after this pattern: "the man Moses was very meek above all men that were on the face of the earth" (Num. xii. 3). That was God's choice for a ruler of His people. But now here is the One to whom all things are delivered, and how perfectly does He exemplify this character! Maker and Lord of all, He has come down among men as one that serveth: doing, throughout, His Father's will, and learning what obedience is, in a strange path of human suffering.

SUBDIVISION 4. (Chap. xii.)

The Passing of Divine Long-suffering.

1 (1-13): Christ the source of all authority.

1 AT that time Jesus went on the sabbath through the [p] corn-fields; and his disciples were hungry, and began to pluck the ears and to eat. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the [q] sabbath. But

[p] Mk. 2. 23-28. Lk. 6. 1-5. *cf.* Deut. 23. 25.

[q] Lk. 13. 10-17. Jno. 5. 9-17.

Well may we learn such a lesson from such a Teacher! and, submitting ourselves to such a yoke as He will impose, find rest from the unrest of our own self-will!

Some think of His yoke here, as if it were a yoke He had borne that He gave us, or as if we shared it with Him. But the "red heifer" is His picture, "upon which never came yoke" (Num. xix. 2): the doing of His Father's will was never that to Him. For a yoke implies restraint; and then there must be something to be restrained: and this for us is true, as for Him it could not be. He speaks both of a yoke and of a burden; but the yoke is not that of the law, but a gentle as well as salutary one; and His burden is light.

SUBD. 4.

The fourth subdivision now closes this part with the full manifestation of the breach between the Lord and Israel. The incidents are grouped together, however, not altogether historically, but according to the usual manner in Matthew, for the purpose of illustrating clearly the great dispensational change that is beginning. The story of the corn-fields and the healing of the withered hand is brought in here from the earlier place to which it belongs chronologically, because the Sabbath was a sign of God's covenant with the nation, and Christ being Lord of it shows how absolutely dependent upon Him their blessing was. The repetition of their awful charge of casting out demons through the prince of the demons, gives occasion to the Lord's warning as to blasphemy against the Spirit as the unpardonable sin. While at the end of the twelfth chapter He formally refuses the claim of fleshly relationships, such as Israel's was ("of whom, as concerning the flesh Christ came,") and declares the spiritual tie between His disciples and Himself as that which replaces it,—the new principle of Christianity. In the next chapter we have the parables of the Kingdom in its present form, and the very style (the parable) shows the mass of the people as given up to hardness of heart (xiii. 11–15). It is true that after all this the Lord presents Himself definitively to the nation, riding into Jerusalem as her King in fulfilment of Zechariah's prophecy, and this brings on the closing scenes; but it is the full public confirmation which they here give, and which it was designed of God that they should be permitted to give, of a rejection which had virtually taken place before. At this, and the principle involved in it, we shall have to look, when we reach that portion of the Gospel.

1. [1] The question of the Sabbath is that which we find first raised; and Christ declares Himself the Lord of the sabbath on a double ground, that of His Person and that of His work. At this we must look more closely. The two incidents given here are found in both the other synoptic Gospels, and the question (somewhat differently answered) is found in all.

If the ten commandments were, as Scripture positively declares (Ex. xxxiv. 27), God's covenant with His people, the Sabbath as the fourth of these had evidently a peculiar place among them. It was the only commandment that was positive, not moral,—something, therefore, which, with the failure of the covenant itself, might fail and be set aside, as those which were moral could not. Covenant or no covenant, every other part of the "ten words" has its ground in the nature of God Himself, and must be as unchanging as He is. Thus, although the "rule" of Christianity is not that of the law but a higher one (Gal. vi. 16), yet it is none the less true that "the *righteousness* of the law" —the "righteous requirement" (*δικαίωμα*), that which was essentially right-

he said unto them, Have ye not read what [r] David did, when he was hungry, and those with him: how he entered into the house of God, and ate the show-bread, which it was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those with him, but only for the priests? Or have ye not

[r] 1 Sam. 21. 1-6. Ex. 25. 30. Ex. 29. 32, 33. Lev. 24. 5-9.

eous in it—"is fulfilled in us who walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 4). In the sabbath, then, we find something which in its being set aside could be a "sign" of their relationship with God broken by their sin, as no other commandment could.

And the Sabbath *was* a "sign." "I gave them My sabbaths," says God by Ezekiel, "to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them" (Ezek. xx. 12). For this purpose it was, in fact, every way fitted. As first given in the book of Exodus, it is a memorial of God's rest as the Creator, when satisfied with the goodness of all His hands had made. Thus alone could He rest ever; and as a sign of God resting as satisfied, we can see at once how much the maintenance of the sabbath meant for an Israelite,—how fiercely the Pharisee would resent the thought of its being set aside. In Deuteronomy (v. 15) they are commanded to keep it as a people redeemed from Egyptian bondage; and here also the loss of it would be most serious. As the sign of a people set apart to God they had often submitted to all kinds of injury rather than themselves violate it.

With their multiplied guards against infringement—the hedge round the law—the disciples rubbing the ears of corn between the hands could be thought of as a work: the *gathering* for personal use, if hungry, was permitted. The Pharisees boldly appeal to Him about the conduct of His disciples in doing what was not lawful to do *upon the sabbath;* not unlawful *in itself*, or at other times, but as a violation of the day of rest. The Lord replies, justifying them against the charge, but not at all in the way we should expect Him to have done. He does not attack their human additions to the divine Word, nor their fine spun interpretations of it: He takes higher and stronger ground, exposing the whole condition of the people as before God, and through their unbelief in Him, who was Lord of the sabbath, and with whose rejection the sabbath could no longer be with them at all.

David was ahungered, and those that were with him: did they remember how he entered into the house of God, and ate the show-bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those with him, but only for the priests? This was not a doubtful point, not a question of human additions to the law or interpretations of it, but a direct opposition to the Levitical statute. But how, then, could the Lord justify this? Was it on the ground of hunger, merely? and were they so far from possibility of help as to justify the setting aside of the law in their case? and was every hungry man entitled with David here to set it aside?

The answer must be surely sought elsewhere: David, who took the show-bread, was in fact the anointed King of Israel, Saul having been rejected of God for his disobedience to the divine commands. Yet David was now fleeing, a well-nigh solitary man, from the causeless wrath of Saul. Moreover upon the King all Israel's relation to God now depended. The priesthood had utterly failed; the ark was in practical banishment all the days of Saul (1 Chron. xiii. 3). And, according to the prophetic word of the man of God to Eli, even the "*faithful* priest," raised up of God, was to "walk before" His "anointed" king "continually." (1 Sam. ii. 35, 36, and contrast Num. xxvii. 21.) Thus David brings the ark to Zion, and assumes afterwards the ordering of the service in connection with it.

David, then, being in rejection, the whole relationship of God with Israel had suffered eclipse, and the sanctity of the consecrated things was departed from them: and this is, no doubt, the meaning of his words to the high-priest upon the occasion referred to: "and the bread is, as it were, common, though it were

read in the law that on the sabbaths the [s]priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are guiltless? But I say unto you, that here is one [t]greater than the temple. But if ye had known what that is, "I will have [u]mercy and not sacrifice," ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is [v]Lord of the sabbath.

And, when he was departed thence, he came into their synagogue. And behold, a man having a hand [w]withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath? that they might accuse him. But

s Num.28.9, 10. *cf.* Jno. 7. 22, 23.
t *cf.* 2 Chro. 6. 18. *cf.* Is.66.1,2. vers. 41,42.
u Hos. 6. 6. Mi. 6. 6-8. *cf.* 1 Sam. 15. 22. *cf.* ch.15.4-6.
v *cf.* Jno. 5. 17. *cf.* Col.2.16.

17. w Mk. 3. 1-6; Lk. 6. 6-11; *cf.* Lk. 14. 3, 4; *cf.* Is. 56. 3-8.

sanctified this day in the vessel." All was, for the moment, in abeyance in Israel, and that because of the rejection of the anointed of Jehovah. How much more surely, then, when the antitypical David was in their midst, only to be rejected, was it the uttermost folly to contend for a sabbath! How could the sabbath remain for those who were refusing the Lord of the sabbath?*

The Lord cites from the law itself another witness. The priestly service of sacrifice did not cease upon the sabbath: the morning and evening sacrifices were even increased (Num. xxviii. 9, 10). Here man's sin was the cause, but the grace of God also that provided for the sin. This whole typical sacrificial system, much older than the law, and dating really from the gate of Eden, though incorporated with the legal system when this was established, was the constant, though veiled, witness of the grace running through all previous dispensations. Before it, wherever there was conflict, the "sign" of the legal covenant gave way, as here. Thus, even now, Israel's sin, and yet also the incoming grace of God along with it, were setting aside the legal covenant. "The temple" thus insisted on this violation of the Sabbath, for the glory of Him whose abode it was, and in the interests of those who could only in such a manner be maintained in relation to Him. But here was what was greater than the temple as much as the antitype was greater than the type: temple and sacrifice, the glory of God and the blessing of man, were all represented there in Him, as never before had been. No doubt, they were ignorant of it: alas, they were ignorant of plainer things, in which the character of God whom they professed to serve declared itself. *He* had said: "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," but with them sacrifice (in the mere external way) overshadowed mercy. God was a God of requirement rather than of bounteous giving. Had they known Him as such, they would not have condemned the guiltless.

For the truth was here, the seal of all that He was saying, that "the Son of man was Lord of the Sabbath,"—the One, therefore, who had in His hand the whole adjudgment of their case; which in law, too, had gone so entirely against them. The Giver of divine rest was, indeed, among them: as that, we have just heard him proclaim Himself; for no rest could there be for man, except at the same time God could rest also. In Christ He has declared His delight; on Him the Spirit of God, dove-like, rests; He is the "Father of eternity," the One who brings about the eternal rest of God, and who, by His work, brings sinners to partake of it. But thus also, if He be rejected, Sabbath there can be none, and for ever none.

[2] The claim of His work is more distinctly affirmed in His healing the withered hand in the synagogue afterwards. Here He does work Himself, and in answer to their challenge. With distinct purpose to accuse Him, they ask, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath?" to which He answers by another question: would they not lift a sheep of theirs out of a pit upon the sabbath? and was not a man more than a sheep? Then, having silenced them with His word, He silences them with His deed: divine power heals the man before their eyes. Who shall

* See for further remarks, and especially the relation of the shew-bread to a rejected Christ and to Christianity, 1 Sam. xxi. *notes.*

he said unto them, What man shall there be of you, who if he have one [x]sheep, and it fall into a pit upon the sabbath, will not lay hold of it, and lift it out? How much, then, is a man better than a sheep! so that it is lawful to do [y]well upon the sabbath. Then saith he to the man, [z]Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth, and it was restored, as sound as the other.

2 (14–21): acceptance of rejection.

[2] But the Pharisees went out and took [a]counsel together against him, how they might destroy him. But Jesus, knowing it, [b]withdrew himself from thence; and many followed him, and he healed them all; and he [c]charged them strictly that they should not make him known: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Esaias the prophet, saying, [d]Behold, my servant whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show forth judgment to the nations. He

x Lk. 13. 15, 16. Lk. 14. 5.
y *cf.* Jno. 7. 23, 24.
z *cf.* Ex. 4. 6, 7. *cf.* chap. 9. 6, 7.
a Mk. 3. 6, 7. Lk. 6. 11.
b *cf.* Lk. 4. 30. *cf.* Jno. 10. 39, 40.
c chap. 8. 4. chap. 9. 30. Mk. 8. 26.
d Is. 42. 1–4. chap. 3. 17. *cf.* ch. 11. 29.

stay God's love from going forth? and yet they but respond to this with more determined hatred.

[2] We now, for the first time, hear of a council held to put Jesus to death. Aware of it, He withdraws Himself, but cannot withdraw from the need which continually appeals to Him. Still the stream of mercy flows; but He charges them strictly not to make Him known: He accepts rejection, will not gather the multitudes after Him by the fame of His abundant miracles, nor raise up any against His enemies. There was plenty of material to work upon, plenty of readiness, as we know, to follow a leader of such a kind as had arisen and still would rise; but He was upon a different path and with a different purpose from any of theirs. The Spirit of God quotes from Esaias to show this. The Son-Servant (ὁ παῖς) of God, His Chosen, His Beloved, in whom His soul delights,—terms by which He is characterized in answer to the enmity and reproach which manifest themselves upon man's part,—characterized, too, by the Spirit that abides upon Him, in the fulness of that Spirit He is going to show judgment to the nations. Judgment is here the absolute right of things. Quietness, patience and gentleness characterize Him: "He shall not strive, nor cry, nor cause His voice to be heard in the streets. A bruised reed"—the perfect symbol of weakness surely—"will He not break, and smoking flax will He not quench, until He send forth judgment unto victory. And in His name shall the nations trust."

The application here is perfectly evident. Rejected of Israel, He is turning to the Gentiles, and we think, and are intended to think, of the present grace going out to the Gentiles during the Christian dispensation. But such a Gentile dispensation is never contemplated in the Old Testament prophets: it is a gap of time in the working out of God's purposes as to Israel, which in this way foreshortens their perspective, and brings the first and second comings of the Lord between which it lies, into a closeness of connection which is confusing enough to those who are not aware of this.* Isaiah in the passage quoted does not, in fact, speak of such a dispensation. He begins with the character of the Lord's ministry in Israel as Matthew here exhibits it, and then contrasts with this His showing judgment to the nations, and the final blessing which will flow out to them, in words which are quite capable of taking in the present time; and Matthew uses it in this way. There is no statement of any change of dispensation, as is clear; none the less it suits well with what is now taking place,

*The principle itself is clearly stated, chap. xiii. 11, 35; Rom. xvi. 25, 26; Eph. iii. 6, 9, 10; Col. i. 25–27, and will be considered under these texts.

shall not strive nor cry out, nor shall any hear his voice in the streets; a bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, until he bring forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the nations trust.

3 (22-32): the blasphemy of the Spirit.

[3] Then was brought to him one [e]possessed by a demon, blind and dumb; and he healed him, so that the dumb man [f]spake and saw. And all the multitudes were astonished and said, Is this the [g]son of David? But the Pharisees, when they heard it, said, This man doth not cast out demons, but by [h]Beelzebul, the prince of demons. But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom [i]divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand; and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself, how then shall his kingdom stand? If *I* also by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your [j]sons cast them out? therefore *they* shall be your judges. But if *I* by the Spirit of God cast out demons, then surely the [k]kingdom of God hath come upon you. Or how can any one enter into the [l]strong

e *cf.* chap.9. 32, 33.
f *cf.* Is.35.5,6. *cf.* Ps. 126. 1, 2.
g ch. 9. 27. ch. 21. 9.
h chap.9.34. Mk. 3. 22-30. Lk. 11. 14-20.
i *cf.* Jn.7.22. *cf.*2 Chron. 20. 23.
j *cf.* Lk. 9. 49, 50. *cf.*Lk.10.17. *cf.* Acts 19. 13-16.
k *cf.*Ex.8.19. *cf.* ch. 4. 17.
l *cf.*Is.49.24, 25. *cf.*1Pet.5 8.

—the shadow of the cross now beginning to fall across the path of One who meek and lowly of heart, and knowing what is before Him, accepts rejection and this uttermost sorrow with it, finding His joy meanwhile in such service of love as grace had brought Him down to, His precious compensation for the cross itself.

[3] And the road still leads downwards. One possessed by a demon is brought to Him, blind and dumb; and, the demon cast out, the blind and the dumb is at once restored. The multitudes, astonished, cry out, "Is this the Son of David?" and yet, as the question implies, only half convinced. The Pharisees hasten to extinguish the spark of this conviction by repeating their former blasphemy. They could not deny the power that was so manifest. They were driven then, if they did not submit and own God in it, to the awful alternative of imputing this to Satan. To Himself, it would seem, they dared not do this. The Lord read it in their hearts, however, and answered it. If Satan could cast out Satan, as they supposed, his kingdom would be divided against itself, and such a divided kingdom could not stand. Division there might be, no doubt, and discord in many respects, and in fact evil is in this way ever discordant, as truth and goodness are the only perfect unity. But with these healed demoniacs, it was not insinuated even that merely one form of evil had contended with another,—one had given place to another. Nay, the power of Satan, they confessed, was broken and gone: Satan was really cast out. Satan, then, had not done this. To say so would be but to confound good with evil, and lose the power of discernment altogether.

Moreover their sons professedly cast out demons. How was it, then, if they admitted, as they did admit, this? Was it an opposite power that worked in the same way? or how did they distinguish? These, then, would be their judges.

If, on the other hand, it had to be admitted that this was the work of the Spirit of God, the kingdom of God had come upon them unawares. The expression here suggests the idea of surprise: here it was, not indeed as established outwardly, but in the power which belonged to it, and that as manifested in the King Himself. Yet they were not prepared for it and did not recognize it, when before their eyes! Who, then, could enter into a strong man's house,

man's house, and seize his goods, except he first [m]bind the strong man? and then he will plunder his house. He that is not [n]with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. Wherefore I say unto you, [o]All sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the [p]Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in [q]this age nor in that to come.

4 (33-37): The test of the tree.

[4] Either make the [r]tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by its fruit. Ye [s]offspring of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. The good man out of his good treasure bringeth forth good things; and the evil man out of his evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you that every [t]idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account of it in the day of judgment: for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

5 (38-42): the end in divine government.

[5] Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, Teacher, we wish to see a [u]sign from thee. But he answered and said to them, An evil and [v]adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.

m cf. chap. 4. 10, 11. *cf.* Heb. 2. 14, 15.
n cf. Lk. 9. 50. *cf.* Rev. 3. 16.
o Lk. 24. 47. Acts 13. 38, 39. *cf.* 1Jno. 1. 7.
p cf. ch. 21. 37, 38. *cf.* ch. 27. 18. *ctr.* Acts 3. 17. *cf.* Acts 7. 51.
q cf. ch. 19. 28. *ctr.* Is. 33. 24. *ctr.* Jer. 50. 20.
r ch. 7. 17, 18.
s ch. 3. 7. ch. 23. 33. *cf.* Ps. 140. 3.
t cf. Rom. 2. 16. *cf.* Jude 15.
u ch. 16. 1-4. Mk. 8. 11. *cf.* Jno. 2. 18-22.
v Is. 57. 3. Mk. 8. 38. *cf.* Jas. 4. 4.

and seize upon his goods, if he did not first bind the strong man? Strong enough Satan had shown himself in the case of these poor demoniacs; yet his power had been vanquished, the enemy bound. And by whom?

It had come, then, to this: there must now be an open decision; neutrality could not be permitted. "He that is not with Me is against Me; he that gathereth not with Me scattereth." Mercy could no longer be shown where the power of the Spirit of God had, as power, to be owned, and yet attributed to Satan himself. This blasphemy was no longer ignorant unbelief: it was open-eyed opposition to God and to all that was of God. A word spoken against the Son of man might be forgiven; the lowly place that He had taken—though it were but fullest grace and to meet the need of man—might yet hide His glory from the eyes of carnal men; but here was what had to be owned, could not be hidden: open-eyed hatred could not be forgiven, could never be. They expected fuller mercy in the age to come—in Messiah's day—than in the present age of law: but this could never be forgiven, in this age nor in that to come.

[4] That generation had proved its condition; the tree was known by its fruit. It was a viper's brood, from which no good thing could be expected any longer. Their mouth was speaking now out of the fulness of the heart. The treasures of the good man were good things, but the treasures of the evil, evil. Thus an idle word might prove a man's condition, and in the day of judgment all such would be taken into account,—by his words a man be justified or condemned. How impossible, then, for any to escape, who has not found his shelter in Him whom Israel here refuses!

[5] The end, then, had been reached morally. It was no use asking now for signs. An evil and adulterous generation could not be helped by signs. One they should have, the sign of the prophet Jonah. Jonah, three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, had been a sign to the Ninevites, and thus

For, as [w]Jonas was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of [x]Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, more than Jonas is here. The [y]queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it: for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon: and behold, [z]more than Solomon is here.

6 (43-45): the evil mastering.

6 But when the [a]unclean spirit is gone out of the man, he goeth through dry places seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it [b]empty, swept and adorned. Then goeth he and taketh with him [c]seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the [d]last state of that man becometh worse than the first. So shall it be also to this evil generation.

7 (46-50): the rejection of natural ties complete.

7 While he was yet speaking to the multitudes, behold, his [e]mother and his brethren stood without, seeking to speak with him. And one said to him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, seeking to speak to thee. But he answered and said to him that

w Jonah 1. 17.
x Jonah 3. 5-9. Lk. 11. 32. ch. 11. 20-24.
y 1 Ki. 10. 1-13. Lk. 11. 31.
z ver. 6. *cf.* Ps. 72.1, etc.
a Lk. 11.24-26. *cf.* Ezra 1. 1-3.
b *cf.* ch. 2. 3 with Lk.2. 7. *cf.* ch. 23.27-31. *cf.*ch.24.1,2.
c *cf.*Lk.16.9.
d *cf.* Jno. 5. 43 with 2 Thess. 2. 8-12. *cf.* Rev. 13. 11-18.
e Mk. 3. 31-35. Lk.8.19-21.

the preaching of a man, as it were risen from the dead, had brought that great city to repentance. Well, the Son of man would be really in the grave three days and nights, rejected and cast out, but at His preaching by His resurrection they, more hardened than Nineveh, would not repent. The Ninevites would rise up in the judgment to condemn them; so much the more as the Son of man was greater than Jonah. The queen of the south also, would rise up in the judgment against them, who came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon: and here was One how much greater!

6 The Lord goes on to predict the end of this reformed and law-boasting generation, which rejected Him. They were cleansed from idolatry indeed, but it was but as when the unclean spirit had gone out of a man, not cast out, but of its own will. Swept and adorned its house might be, but, empty, it only invited the return of its former occupant. The occupant would return: idolatry will again take possession of Israel in the latter days, and with seven other spirits worse than this: and they will enter in and dwell there. The last state of that generation* will be worse than the first. We shall see later on in the Gospel (ch. xxiv) to what the Lord refers.

7 All this is closed, on the Lord's part, with a significant word. While still speaking to the people, He is told by one of the bystanders that His mother and His brethren stand without, desiring to speak with Him. The cry had been raised, as we learn from Mark (iii. 21), even among His "friends," that He was beside Himself; and this attempt to speak with Him on the part of His relatives no doubt was a consequence of this. The opposition had grown so great, that alarm for His personal safety may have actuated them, and the desire to induce Him to take in some respects a different course. But if such were their thought Matthew gives no hint of it; and the omission is significant. The Lord's words are not to be taken as if they referred merely to any conduct of

* "Generation" in Scripture is often used with a moral application rather than in a time sense,—for a succession of people with the same moral characteristics, see Ps. xii. 7. This is, no doubt, the sense here.

spake to him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren" And, stretching out his hand over his disciples, he said, Behold, my mother and my brethren: for whosoever shall [f] do the will of my Father who is in heaven, *he* is my brother, and sister, and mother.

[f] Lk. 11. 27, 28.

this kind, as far as this Gospel is concerned. They are to be taken rather in connection with what has gone before and what follows here; that is, as referring to the dispensational change beginning. Judaism was essentially a national religion: men were "Jews by nature," as the apostle says, although of course, proselytes were admitted. Christians are such by *new* nature only: the spiritual tie is the whole thing. And that is what the Lord here affirms: "He answered and said to him that spake to Him, Who is My mother? and who are My brethren? And, stretching out His hand over His disciples, He said, Behold My mother and My brethren: for whosoever shall do the will of My Father who is in heaven, *he* is My brother, and sister, and mother."

DIV. 4.

We have now come, therefore, to that which directly appeals to us, the Kingdom as we know it at the present time, Israel while refusing the King having necessarily lost it, as the Lord declares to them (chap. xxi. 43). But this involves a momentous change: for the promises concerning it, all contemplated Israel as in the central place of glory and power in that day, the law of Jehovah going forth from Zion and His word from Jerusalem, the glory of God being manifested there, and the Lord reigning openly in power to the ends of the earth (Mic. iv.) These promises still belong to Israel, because His counsel shall surely stand,—His gifts and calling are without repentance (Rom. ix. 4; xi. 29). But this being so, either the Kingdom itself must be delayed till Israel is brought to receive the Lord; or else, it must in the meantime come in in a different manner from that contemplated in the prophets. This last it is which has actually taken place; not, surely, as an after-thought on God's part, for there is no such thing with Him as this, but on the contrary, revealing the riches of His grace according to counsels hidden, indeed, from ages and generations past, but now to make known to principalities and powers by means of the Church the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. iii. 10).

The whole time of the working out of these counsels is necessarily, therefore, a gap in Old Testament prophecy, and a time of delay as to the accomplishment of blessing for the earth, —a blessing which is inseparably bound up with that of Israel nationally. Christianity is indeed universal in its character, the call of the gospel being world-wide—"to every creature which is under heaven;" but it is not a call to earthly but to heavenly blessings, and to strangership and pilgrim character upon earth. And this is, so far, only what the family of faith has all along confessed (Heb. xi. 13–16.) Israel's inheritance nationally is another matter: and here the voices of the prophets unanimously direct us on to such a scene as we have seen Micah picture. Heaven in the prophets is the place of God's dwelling, but little is known of what is inside, even though Enoch went there, and Elijah went there, in days long since. For us it is opened and furnished; Christ has come out and gone in, and now we know it; and He is coming again to receive us to Himself. Our blessings are in heavenly places in Him; our home is with Himself.

In two different ways people get confused and confuse others, as to things as plain as this. Some, in the enjoyment of what is simple Christian truth to-day, read their Christianity back into the Old Testament, and can think of nothing else but a heavenly inheritance for all the saints of all times. Some, on the other hand, read the Old Testament forward into the New Testament, and make the earth the final habitation for all. Scripture is larger and more diverse than either of these understand. The Old Testament outlook is earthly unmistak-

ably, the New Testament revelation is what our Joseph, rejected of his brethren, is telling as the "Revealer of secrets" in the ears of His Gentile bride.

These are the "mysteries," which characterize Christianity, so that the apostle bids us account of his fellow-laborers and himself "as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. iv. 1). The first great mystery is that of Christ Himself—"the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. iii. 16). Along with this, however, and as part of it, we have His whole life here, "justified in the Spirit"—by the descent of the Spirit of God upon Him,—and again by His resurrection from the dead,—"seen of angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory." It is Christ actually *come*, and known in His whole life down here, that is the mystery: not the prophetic picture merely, which certainly and clearly made known His Deity (*e. g.* Mic. v. 2), but the fulfilment of this in the person of Jesus Christ. Next we may put "the mystery of God's will . . . to *head* up," as the word really is, "all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth" (Eph. i. 9, 10)—the Headship of Christ over the (new) creation. Then we have "the mystery of *the* Christ"—not simply of Christ personally, but that in Him "the Gentiles should be joint-heirs, and a *joint-body*" (σύσσωμα), a body formed of Jews and Gentiles brought together,—"and *joint*-partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel (Eph. iii. 4, 6). Then the mystery of Christ and the Church, His Bride (Eph. v. 32). Then the mystery of "Christ *in you*" (Col. i. 27). The change of the living concurrently with the resurrection of the saints at the coming of Christ (1 Cor. xv. 51), the present blinding of Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles is come in (Rom. xi. 25), even the "mystery of iniquity" working out in Christian times, (2 Thes. ii. 7), and which the woman "Babylon the Great" bears as a brand upon her forehead (Rev. xvii. 5),—all these are "mysteries" connected with the Christian dispensation, hidden, therefore, in Old Testament times (Rom. xvi. 25; Eph. iii. 5; Col. i. 26): secrets made known to those initiated into Christianity.

It is not the place here to inquire further into these: none of them are mentioned as such in the Gospels; but we can see that in them the essential and distinctive features of Christianity are to be found. In that part of Matthew to which we have now reached, such secrets begin to be told out; and according to what we have seen to be the theme of this Gospel, they begin with the "mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven,"—the Kingdom in the new form which it acquires by the rejection of the King, and His consequent absence from the place of His Kingdom. He reigns indeed, but on the Father's throne (Rev. iii. 21),—a higher place, and which manifests His glory as the divine Son: none could sit upon such a throne but He; still it is not His human throne as Son of man. The Kingdom is administered for Him in His absence by His servants, and the fashion of it, therefore, greatly changed. In a parable in Mark, the Lord compares it to a man casting seed into the earth, and seeing it no more till the time of harvest: it springs up and grows, he knows not how (Mark iv. 26–29). This is already significant as to the possibility of failure. Left in the hands of men, we know, only too well, what man is. Divine wisdom and love cannot really be baffled; and yet we must be prepared for this seeming to be so.

These mysteries of the Kingdom speak of "things that had been hidden from the foundation of the world" (verse 35), and he that is now discipled unto the Kingdom of heaven has, therefore, in his treasures things "new" as well as "old" (verse 52). Of the bringing together of these the parables that follow here will give us decisive proof.

SUBD. 1.

The history of the Kingdom is given us before the principles. It was necessary to have clearly before the eye the character of that to which the principles apply. And more especially is this so because of the opposition between the Kingdom in its initiation and in its after-development, which the history

DIVISION 4. (Chap. xiii.–xx. 28.)

The Kingdom in the hands of Men.

SUBDIVISION 1. (xiii. 1–52.)

Viewed as a Whole.

SECTION 1. (1–35.)

As left to itself,—the King absent.

1 (1-30): Individual aspects. 1 (1-23): a kingdom of the truth.

1. [1] ON that day went Jesus out of the [g] house, and sat by the [h] sea-side. And there were gathered unto him great multitudes, so that he entered into a ship himself, and sat down; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake to them many things in parables,

g cf. ch. 23. 38.

h cf. Rev. 13. 1, etc. *cf.* Rev. 17. 15. Mk. 4. 1.

so clearly shows, and which would naturally raise question of their application altogether, if this contradiction were not accounted for.

On the other hand, the veil of parable is thrown over the whole; and the Lord's explanation of the reason of this (verses 11–13), while applying primarily to unbelieving Jews, has in it most important principles of far wider application.

History given before-hand, as One alone is competent to give it, is given, not to gratify curiosity about the future, but as practical wisdom for the wise in heart, that the servants of the Lord may find the path wherein to walk and to serve Him (Rev. i. 1). Exercise of conscience will be needed to understand it, far more than grasp of intellect, and we need not wonder at diverse interpretations. Yet the Lord expects us to be able to see clearly through the veil (Mark iv. 13); and without certainty no application can be safely made: Scripture must first of all be for "doctrine," in order that it may be for "reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. iii. 16).

Matthew gives us here seven parables—the usual number indicating completeness. In some sense, surely, they are designed to give us a perfect picture of the Kingdom, but in what sense we are not entitled to decide without examination of the whole series; which is divided by difference of place and audience into four and three, the usual division of a septenary series. Four are spoken to the multitude upon the sea-shore; the last three to the disciples in the house. The numbers concur with the circumstances to lead us to expect in the first four a more external, in the last three a more internal and spiritual view. The explanation of the second parable has its place also with the three.

Sec. 1.

The first four parables also are plainly susceptible of another division. Four is often divided in Scripture into 3+1; and in this way is significant of what is good: the number of the creature (4) resolves itself into the numbers which speak of divine manifestation. On the other hand it may divide into 2x2, which as true division seems generally to have in it an evil significance. The four parables here divide in the latter way: the first two giving individual aspects,—the wheat and the tares; while the last two give us the collective aspect, the seeds gathered, as it were, into one seed; the leaven permeating the meal. We shall see as we go on, the importance of these divisions.

But the character attaching to the whole four parables may first of all be emphasized. The series as a whole has been already spoken of as applying to the Kingdom in its present "mystery" form; but we shall find that in fact only the first four parables develop this,—the fact that it is a Kingdom *left to itself*,—the King absent. This certainly does not characterize in the same way the last three, inasmuch as in two of them we find the figure of the King Himself. The man who in the one sells all that he has to buy the "field"—if the interpretation of the second parable hold good here ("the field is the world")—can be

saying, Behold, the [i]sower went forth to sow; and as he sowed, some [seed] fell by the [j]wayside, and the birds came and devoured them. And some fell on [k]rocky places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprang up, because they had no depth of earth; but when the sun arose, they were scorched, and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among [l]thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked them. And some fell upon [m]good ground, and yielded fruit, this a hundredfold, this sixty, this thirty. He that hath ears, let him hear.

[i] Mk. 4. 3-9. Lk. 8. 5-8.
[j] ver. 19.
[k] vers. 20, 21.
[l] ver. 22.
[m] ver. 23.

no other than the Lord. And then also the similar action of the merchantman who buys the pearl must surely point out the same blessed Person. Here, then, we are in another line of thought to that of the first four parables. Of course, this waits for confirmation or disproof upon a closer examination.

1. The first two parables are in evident contrast with one another in this respect: in the first we have the various success—as to three parts out of four we must say the *ill* success of the good seed. In the second we have the enemy and the bad seed. Even thus far, it seems to be a picture of decline that is before us; or at least, the scene in the meanwhile grows darker and not brighter; and the tares remain, we are authoritatively told, until the harvest. But let us now take up the parables in detail.

[1] The Lord goes out of the house and sits by the seaside. He has just declared the principle which carries Him outside of Judaism. The doers of His Father's will are now alone to be His kindred. He leaves therefore the house, the sphere of natural relationship, and takes His place by the sea, the figure of man in the restlessness and barrenness of nature, of man apart from God, and so of the Gentiles. The concourse of the multitude, instead of detaining Him, hastens His departure: He enters into a ship and sits down there—takes His place definitively in separation from them.

He speaks to them indeed from this new place that He has taken, but He speaks in parables. The nation as such is given up to hardness of heart: there is no use in increasing their condemnation by more light. And yet the very addressing them shows that all are not given up. "Blindness in part is happened to Israel:" if there are those who have earnestness of heart to penetrate within the external form they shall find still a gracious heart that beats towards them. The national rejection leaves individual responsibility where it ever is. He that hath an ear, as the Lord tells them, still may hear.

Yet behold, a Sower is going forth to sow; and here is a decisive change. Israel had been God's vineyard planted once and enclosed and nurtured by God's unforgetting love. That had now long been given up: the fence had been taken away; the boar out of the woods had wasted it; the people had long been scattered. Still, though this were so, the end had not then been reached: after seventy years a remnant had been permitted to return to the desolate land, and a "fig-tree" had been "planted in the vineyard" (Luke xiii. 6). But this, too, had now failed to bring forth fruit; if such was to be found, there must be a fresh labor of the husbandman and in fresh fields: the sower must go forth to sow.

There is not now the planting of vines or fig-trees, but what better suits the character of work among the Gentiles,—the broad-cast sowing of seed. Are we not to think also of our Lord's words, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone" (John xii. 24) and to realize the new form of the gospel which would follow that death of His, now coming so plainly into sight? Its being, as the Lord in His interpretation calls it, "the word of the *Kingdom*" does not hinder this; for the apostle shows us in the epistle to the

And the disciples came and said to him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? And he answered and said unto them, Because unto you it is given to know the [n]mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever [o]hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but whosoever hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him. Therefore speak I unto them in parables, [p]because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the [q]prophecy of Esaias, which saith, In hearing ye shall hear, and not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for this people's heart is grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But [r]blessed are *your* eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear. For verily I say unto

n Mk. 4. 10, 11. Lk. 8. 9,10.
o ch. 25. 29. Mk. 4. 25. Lk. 8. 18.
p *cf.* Jno. 7. 16, 17. *cf.* Jno. 8. 43.
q Is. 6. 9, 10. Mk. 4. 12. Lk. 8. 10. Jno. 12.39-41. Acts 28.25-27.
r Lk. 10. 23, 24. Lk.8.11-15.

Romans (x. 9–13) the gospel of the Kingdom in its present form, as based fully upon the death and resurrection of Christ. Death and resurrection both we have, wherever the seed springs up; and that is what we are called to watch now, where and with what final result the seed springs up. What success in its world-wide sowing is the word of the Kingdom now to have?

We are at once made aware that it is not world-wide success we are to expect from it. First of all, we see in the seed received by the wayside, the hard, unreceptive heart, hardened like the road by the constant traffic of the world, so that the seed never really finds lodgment in it. True, it is said to have been "sown in his heart," and that is a solemn thing. It is what the apostle's words imply, where he speaks of "by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to *every* man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor. iv. 2). And yet he goes on immediately to speak of those to whom his gospel is hidden, "in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of those that believe not, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." These two things are easily reconcilable, and we can see that the case here is quite similar to the first one in the parable, where the "birds of the air" are interpreted by the Lord as "Satan." In the parable the word has first been sown in the heart: Satan could not prevent that. It has made its appeal to the conscience, commended itself as truth to it, been sown in the heart for acceptance or rejection.* Conscience commends it, but that is not faith; in which always the personal will is concerned. Conviction is not acceptance. The soul may tremble, Felix-like, before the truth, and yet refuse it: the seed after all lies outside; and now comes Satan's work,—the god of this world blinding the minds of those that believe not, Satan catching away that which was sown in the heart, but which the heart has not accepted. Those may well tremble who have not been true to what they could not but recognize as truth: for here Satan has his opportunity with them, and he never fails to use his opportunity. Well he knows what blessedness lies for them, contained in what they so lightly refuse. His business is to prevent their knowing that,—to hide the glory of Christ from those who might be attracted by it.

For Christians also the same principle holds good. For every truth in the word of God has to be accepted thus in the soul or rejected, and we are tested

* Compare Rom. x. 8, 9: "the word is . . . in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we preach; that if thou . . . shalt believe in thy heart," etc., The "heart" in Scripture is not necessarily the affections, as we generally take it, but the man himself, the real man.

you, that many prophets and righteous men have longed to see what ye behold, and have not seen them, and to hear the things that ye hear and have not heard them.

Hear ye, therefore, the parable of the sower. When any one heareth the word of the kingdom and [s]understandeth it not, the wicked one cometh and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart: this is he that received seed * by the wayside. But he that received seed * upon the rocky places is he who heareth the word and immediately with [t]joy receiveth it; but he has no root in himself, but endureth for a while; and when [u]affliction or persecution cometh on account of the word, immediately he is stumbled. But he that

s *cf.* 1 Cor. 2. 14. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

t *cf.* Is. 58. 2. *cf.* Jno. 5. 35. *cf.* Gal. 3. 1. *cf.* Gal. 5. 7.

u *cf.* Heb. 6. 4-9 with Heb. 10. 34. Acts 14. 22.

* Literally, "is sown."

by it as to how far we also are "of the truth:" "every one that is *of* the truth heareth" Christ's "voice" (John xviii. 37). Not of mere ignorance, but by the refusal of truth, have all systems of error flourished and been built up. And how few, alas, comparatively are there who have not admitted some darkness into their souls by the lack of perfect absolute uprightness before God in every particular! And in some respect it is always the glory of Christ that is thus hidden. What need have we to be cleansed according to His mind that we may have (as He desires for us) "part with Him."

Here, then, in this first failure of the good seed, the opposition of Satan is manifest. We are at once made aware that it is in a world which lieth in the wicked one that the Kingdom of heaven (in this new phase of it) is to be found. Man's responsibility is carefully maintained; but, alas, he is a fallen being, and manifests himself as such: the world, the flesh, and the devil are but too fully united in opposition to Christ. This may be detected even in the first case: for the heart has rejected the truth, and the world's traffic has hardened the heart, and Satan has only taken away that which was unwelcome. But each element of opposition must be fully shown, and we go on to see other forms of it in the seed upon the rocky ground, and that sown among the thorns.

Rocky ground it is, not stony: bed-rock, with a slight layer of earth over it, in which the seed grows rapidly but superficially, the very cause of its destruction in a little while, operating at first to produce hot-house growth: "forthwith it sprang up because it had no depth of earth;" by and by the sun growing hotter scorched it; and, because it had no root, it withered away.

Here it is the nature of the ground that is at fault. In the case of the wayside hearer it might be urged that circumstances had made him what he was: the traffic over it had made the ground hard. Here it was the nature of the ground itself. The prophet—or rather, God by him—speaks of a "heart of stone" (Ezek. xxxvi. 26); and this, without any question, is exactly pictured here. Yet there is earth also, a superficial susceptibility, which promises largely at the beginning: "he heareth the word, and immediately with joy receiveth it;" this is, as the parable states it, a sign of a lack of depth. There has been no deep conviction, no true repentance: the sentiments are engaged, but not the conscience; and such an one may be warm and enthusiastic, and make rapid progress in the learning of truth; but he has not counted the cost: "when affliction or persecution ariseth because of the word, immediately he is stumbled."

This is the flesh at its fairest; capable of coming so near to the kingdom of God, and all the more manifesting its hopeless nature. There is the unbroken rock behind that never yields itself to the word, and gives it no lodgment; and the class of hearers pictured here are born of the flesh only, and so only flesh. Let things be outwardly favorable to profession, it is plain that the

received seed * among thorns is he that heareth the word, and the [v] care of this life † and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that receiveth seed * on the good ground is he who heareth the word and understandeth it, who also beareth [w] fruit and bringeth forth, [z] this one a hundredfold, and another sixty, and another thirty.

v *cf.* ch. 19. 16-26. *cf.* Lk. 12. 13-21. *cf.* 2 Tim. 4. 10. *cf.* 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.
w *cf.* Phil. 1. 11. *cf.* Col. 1. 6.
x *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 41. *cf.* 2 Cor. 9. 6. *cf.* ch. 25. 14-29.

* Literally, "is sown."

† αἰῶν, usually "age," but its oldest meaning (in Homer) was "life."

number of these may multiply largely, and may stick like dead leaves to a tree that has no rough blast to shake them off. But life is none the more in them.

There is still a third class of the unfruitful, and in these the influence of the world is paramount. The seed sown among thorns represents those in whom the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word. Poverty and riches, as Agur long before noted (Prov. xxx. 8, 9), are seen here as alike unfavorable to spiritual life. Yet riches may entice the poor, and care weigh heavily upon the prosperous rich man. The deceitfulness of riches is so great a snare that the Lord has elsewhere said that the rich man could hardly enter into the Kingdom of heaven (Matt. xix. 23). But He expressly guarded this from any implication of its applying to salvation, as if salvation (when men sought *that*) were different for different classes. Of those who realize their need of salvation there is but *one* class: "Christ died for sinners" covers every case. But if it be a question of men seeking after it, the more they have to satisfy themselves with here, the less real is eternity likely to appear. How many have had the interest awakening within their souls stopped by such things as these the day will declare.

And so one part alone out of four of the good seed becomes fruitful really. Not, of course, that this is to be taken as numerical proportion. One fears, indeed, that any reckoning in this way would give less satisfactory results rather than more; but we must leave this with Him who "knoweth them that are His." At any rate we know well that the success of the good seed is partial; and with those in whom it *does* bring forth fruit, there are still various measures of fruitfulness; "one a hundredfold, another sixty, another thirty," says our Lord. The devil, the flesh, and the world, are the unchanging, untiring foes of all that is of God, and the true people of God have no discharge in this life from this war.

In this first parable, then, we see the beginning of the Kingdom to be in the sowing of the word of the Kingdom. The Kingdom is, ideally at least, a kingdom of the truth (John xviii. 37). The subjects are "disciples" (ver. 52). How far the Kingdom being in the hands of men may affect this we have yet to see; but even as we find it already, we find in it unreal disciples as well as true; and this the after-parables confirm. The sphere of the Kingdom is profession, a profession which will be in due time tested by the fruit it bears. There is no undue haste to realize this: the picture is that of a field of growing wheat, as to which the harvest alone can properly decide what the fruit may be; and the harvest itself is not yet spoken of. Manifestly it is a kingdom introduced in a very different way, not merely from any Jewish conception, but from anything that the prophets had announced. Thus it is of the *mysteries* of the Kingdom that the Lord is speaking. Of the sower himself we do not hear: it is upon the seed that our attention is fixed, and whoever sows *that* is the sower. Thus it might be the Lord Himself in His work on earth, although the Kingdom does not begin till the end of the Gospel* (xxviii. 18); it might be any one

* Which is probably the reason why this parable does not begin, as the others do, with "The Kingdom of heaven is like"——. The eleventh verse guards against any mistake resulting.

2 (24-30): the enemy and the spurious wheat.

[2] Another parable set he before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man who sowed [y]good seed in his field; but while men [z]slept, his [a]enemy came and sowed* [b]darnel among the wheat, and went away. Now when the blade shot up and produced fruit, then appeared the darnel also. And the servants

*Literally, "oversowed."

[y] *cf.* 1 Pet. i. 23 with 1 Jno. 3. 9.
[z] *cf.* Eph. 5. 13–15.
[a] vers. 36-43.
[b] *cf.* Acts 20. 29, 30.

afterwards. In the sense in which the second parable speaks (ver. 37), wherever the good seed is sown, the Sower is the Son of man: personally or by His agents, it is all one sowing.

[2] The second parable now shows us the work of the enemy to defeat, as far as he may, the work of Christ. Satan as the prince of the world, which has rejected and cast out the true King, will not receive now His Kingdom; and he is permitted to work without the curb of manifest power to restrain him. It is the "kingdom and *patience* of Jesus Christ," as the apostle at the beginning of Revelation fittingly reminds us (chap. i. 9); and Satan remains throughout, not only the "prince of this world," but the "god" of it (2 Cor. iv. 4). The expression used in the last passage is, in fact, much stronger than even this: it is "the god of this *aion*" or "*age*"; which shows conclusively, therefore, what the "*spirit* of this age" must be. It shuts out hope of any effectual change of this until the Lord comes and Satan is shut up in that prison (Rev. xx. 1–3), in which so many, who ought to be wiser, suppose him to be already, but which will be then a more effectual restraint than even these can persuade themselves is upon him now.

Yet it is not by persecution of the saints that we see Satan acting in this parable. He has practised this often enough, and always will, as far as he can realize that the time is favorable; but he knows, too, and that by plentiful experience, that the "blood of the martyrs is" apt, at least, to be "the seed of the church," and he has found for his purposes what is a better way. This is the way of *imitation*, "as Jannes and Jambres," in Egypt long since, "withstood Moses" (2 Tim. iii. 8), counterfeiting God's miracles with lying wonders; and such is his method in the parable before us now.

The good seed has been sown and is growing up: the "word of the Kingdom" preached has developed into "sons of the Kingdom;" so far, we have just what the previous parable has put before us, the effect of the sowing of the good seed only. The work of the enemy cannot be accomplished by sowing seed of the same kind: he sows darnel in the midst of it, and goes his way. Such "oversowing" is to-day in the East a common piece of malice; and darnel is a poisonous kind of rye, which among the Jews was credited with being a degenerate wheat: its grain is black and bitter. Thus it is evident that we have not here false profession merely, but error and its fruit: at first, deceptive and appearing at any rate not very different from the truth, but by and by developing radical opposition. The dissemination of this is accomplished "while men slept," a thing that shows an evil state among the "children of the day," however natural it may be with others (1 Thess. v. 5–7).

Notice that, throughout the New Testament, if the flesh is opposed to the Spirit, and the world to the Father, the devil is the constant enemy of Christ, and the perversion of the Word and the denial of the Person of Christ are his special work. As Christ is the truth and the true Witness, Satan is "a liar, and the father of it" (John viii. 44). The tempter of Christ in the wilderness, he enters into Judas for the betrayal at a later time. He it is who "deceiveth the whole world" (Rev. xii. 9), and who is cast into the bottomless pit to deceive the nations no more until a thousand years are fulfilled. At the end of this time, being let loose, he again goes out as of old to deceive, and is then cast into the lake of fire (Rev. xx. 3, 8, 10).

The "children of the wicked one" in the parable are thus those who are the

of the householder came and said to him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? whence, then, hath it darnel? And he said unto them, An enemy hath done this. And the servants say unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather it up? But he saith, Nay; lest when ye gather up the darnel, ye root up also the wheat with it. Let [c] both grow together till the harvest, and in the time of harvest I will say unto the

c *cf.* Phil. 3. 18, 19. *cf.* 1 Cor. 5. 5–13. *cf.* 2 Thess. 3. 6.

offspring of his deception, by whom he seeks to antagonize the truth. And the New-Testament epistles give us plenty of proof of such a state of things already begun a good while before the canon of inspiration was completed. It is not needed to do more than refer to this. They show us how insidiously the "mystery of iniquity" began its work (2 Thess. ii. 7), which, however it might be hindered, would never cease until the "wicked one," energized by Satan, should be destroyed at the appearing of Christ (ver. 8). Thus the darnel would remain until the day of harvest, no human hands being competent to accomplish the separation of Christian profession from it. After many centuries now, we are all clear, whatever may be our standpoint, that this separation in fact never has been attained.

But we must remember, however, that it is of the Kingdom that the parable speaks, and not of the Church or Assembly, of which we have not heard, in fact, as yet. A large mass of Christians make no distinction between these, although here it should be plain that "the field is the world,"—the Kingdom in its present phase, the profession of Christianity in the world, or what men call Christendom; and we have no capacity, authority or responsibility to purify Christendom after this fashion. But, if we are truly Christians, we have responsibility to purge out *from our assemblies* "all things that offend, and those committing lawlessness," the thing which the angel-reapers alone can do as to the profession at large.

Rome has taken in hand, and insists upon her authority to anticipate the time of harvest; and the state-churches, following her, have feebly and spasmodically attempted the same thing. Necessarily that has followed which the Lord declared: with some darnel, they have rooted up the wheat also, and indeed this most of all. Yet the prohibition, to these Jewish disciples of the Lord, (taught as they were by the Old Testament to expect the kingdom of Messiah to be an open display of judgment upon transgressors,) would naturally be a mystery indeed; and so to those who confound the New with the Old Testament. But the Lord recognizes fully the coming of the judgment. It is only delayed, not set aside. Evil is allowed in the meanwhile to manifest itself: in the time of harvest, He will say unto the reapers, "Gather together first the darnel, and bind it in bundles for the burning; but gather the wheat into my barn."

We shall find that the Lord in His interpretation carries this further: the darnel is actually burnt, and the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father. This we must look at in its own place. At present we have only the preparatory work with the darnel, which is bound in bundles with a view to its being burnt; and then the wheat is gathered into the barn. The last is clear enough: it speaks of the removal of the true saints to heaven; but the binding of the darnel in bundles is not so clear. It cannot refer to the associations now so characterizing the days in which we are, *except* we take the ground that harvest-time has already begun; and indeed it does begin, as is plain, *before* the saints are taken home. If this were true, it would show the end very nigh. The multiplication of associations, the prevalence of the principle more and more, every one must admit. We should look for it to take a form which would more and more gather the false and shut out the true, while at present true and false are sadly mixed together. With the growth of infidelity, so manifest as it is to-day, this might very quickly result. Even the

2 (31-33): Collective aspects. 1 (31, 32): in independence.

reapers, [d] Gather together first the darnel, and bind it in bundles for burning; but gather the wheat into my barn.

2. [1] Another parable set he before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of [e] mustard seed,

[d] *cf.* Is. 8. 12. *cf.* Rev. 3. 17. *cf.* Rev. 18. 7.

[e] Mk. 4. 30-32. Lk. 13. 18, 19; *cf.* Acts 1. 15, etc.

religious associations are swallowing up the churches, and taking their work into their own hands; and all things move to-day with marvelous rapidity, as the stream grows quicker near the brink of the precipice.

2. The two parables that follow differ strikingly from those that have preceded them, and agree together in this, that we have no longer individuals before us but the mass. In the grain of mustard seed the many grains of the wheat-field are massed together: the "sons of the Kingdom" are no longer seen, nor indeed the "sons of the wicked one," but a general condition,—I believe we may add, resulting from their mixture. The "woman" of the second parable here, the common figure of the professing church, gives us in this the collective aspect, and *not* the leaven, nor the three measures of meal. This we must examine fully in its place; and as to both parables there has been sufficient disagreement among interpreters to make us look carefully at every step we take. Nor have we as to either of them the help in this way that the Lord gives as to the first two.

All the more thankful we may be, therefore, that the second parable has already carried us on to the time of harvest, mournful as it is to realize that it is thus settled without possibility of successful question, that the evil result of the oversowing of the field of profession with false doctrine never will be repaired,—that the crop, as a crop, is very much spoiled, however much the good wheat still reproduces its own likeness. But this, at least, assures us that the parables to follow cannot alter this: they cannot take away the certainty of the failure of things in man's hands which the whole history of the past declares. We have indeed but shown ourselves all along the road the too faithful imitators of our first parents in the violation of every trust that God has committed to us. One might perhaps have hoped that, with the new power of Christianity, a new history might have begun for man; but, on the contrary, every feature of Israel's history has been reproduced in that of Christendom. It is even a proverb that "history repeats itself." Prophecy and history unite to assure us that as to this Christianity is not an exception to the rest.

[1] The parable of the mustard-seed is similar to those that have gone before it in its being the growth of a living thing that is brought before us, but that which is to be remarked in it now is its *disproportionate* growth, in which it seems to overstep the limits of its nature. The round seed of the mustard was used proverbially among the Jews for the smallest of things, which it was relatively to the other seeds they sowed. Its development in the East in favorable places is indeed in conspicuous contrast with its growth elsewhere. But the question is raised at once, Is the world, then, a favorable place for the growth of a kingdom "not of this world," and where the devil and the flesh unite with the world in unceasing opposition to it? Either the world must (measurably, at least,) cease to be what it is, or the seed must change in some respects its character, for the Kingdom of heaven to take its place among the kingdoms of the earth: and this is, in fact what the parable shows.

"And the general meaning," says Edersheim, "would be the more easily apprehended, that a tree, whose wide-spreading branches afforded lodgment to the birds of heaven, was a familiar Old Testament figure for a mighty kingdom that gave shelter to the nations. Indeed it is specifically used as an illustration of the Messianic kingdom."

He refers in the first place to Ezek. xxxi. 3-6, where we have the picture drawn by God Himself of the Assyrian power: "Therefore his height was ex-

> which a man took and sowed in his field; which indeed is less than all seeds, but, when it is grown, it is greater

alted above all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, . . . all the fowls of the heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all great nations." In Daniel we have a similar picture of the Babylonian in Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which is interpreted by the prophet (chap. iv. 20–22): "The tree that thou sawest, which grew and was strong, whose height reached unto the heaven, and the sight therefore to all the earth; whose leaves were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all; under which the beasts of the field dwelt, and upon whose branches the fowls of the air had their habitation: it is thou, O king, who art grown and become strong; for thy greatness is grown and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion to the end of the earth."

The likeness here to the "tree" of the parable cannot surely be doubted: it is a figure of earthly greatness that is pictured. And yet it cannot but be remarked that there is not in the parable after all anything like the greatness of the Assyrian or Babylonian empire. The passage in Ezek. xvii. also, to which Edersheim refers as picturing the Messianic kingdom,—in fact, the resurrection of the house of David in Messiah's day,—still represents a cedar, the stateliest of trees, under which "dwell all fowl of every wing, and in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell." But this speaks of a future time, and a very different dispensation.

The tree of the parable is a *garden shrub out-doing itself.* It grows into a tree, and the birds of heaven lodge in its branches; but if you look at this as divine increase, it will naturally be asked, why then is there nothing more glorious than this? As growth it is dubious, and the mention of the birds of heaven cannot but remind us that the birds of heaven carried away the good seed in the first parable, and that the Lord's interpretation is, "Then cometh *the wicked one.*" Great Babylon, the figure of a professing Christian body in guilty connection with the kings of the earth, becomes "a cage of every unclean and hateful bird" (Rev. xviii. 2). If we remember that this seed and its development give the Kingdom as a whole, and that the previous parable has shown us a mixed condition in fact, the result of the enemy's work, then the anomalous tree becomes perfectly intelligible. The state of the whole has been affected by this mixture of diverse elements. There has resulted from it what we know as Christendom to-day. Christianity has been more or less assimilated to the principles of the world; the world, in consequence becomes more favorable to the adulterated Christianity. The shrub grows,—overgrows its nature, if you consider what its character is as defined at its first beginning. A people unknown by the world (1 John iii. 1), and strangers in it (1 Pet. ii. 11), followers of One it crucified, and crucified to it by His cross (Gal. vi. 14), not of it, even as He is not of it (John xvii. 14), become a people well-known, honored and at home in it. Nay, they acquire the right to rule, and like their predecessors at Corinth, "reign as kings" (1 Cor. iv. 8), quite without fear of apostolic rebuke for it. Yet after all, the spiritual and political interests can never become so accordant that the tree shall assume the dimensions of full imperial power. The woman may ride the beast, but even so these are diverse. Alas, this political Christianity is more powerful to corrupt the Church than to elevate the world, and she that rides the beast is but a painted harlot. It passes the subtlest imagination to conceive how what is "not of the world" can become *of* the world and yet retain its character. The birds of the heaven are wiser: they understand their claim upon the abnormal tree for lodgment, and find it there.

The Kingdom is now, in the form it has taken, in independence of its King. To the Corinthians the apostle could say, "Ye have reigned as kings *without us:*" they were not in communion any longer with men "appointed to death," for their sufferings "a spectacle to the world and to angels and to men." "I

than herbs, and becometh a *f* tree, so that the *g* birds of heaven come and lodge in its branches.

[2] (33): the leaven of falsehood.

[2] Another parable spake he unto them, The kingdom

f cf. Ezek. 17. 22–24. *cf.* Ezek. 31. 3–9. *cf.* Dan. 4. 20–22. *g cf.* vers. 4, 19; *cf.* Rev. 18. 2; *cf.* Rev. 2. 20.

would to God," he says, "that ye did reign, that we also might reign with you." If the saints reign now, they are still reigning without the apostles. Time can make no difference in this respect, so long as it is still true that all the saints are not reigning together. And that time will not come until the Lord takes His own throne as Son of man,—a *human* throne that He can share with others. True, He reigns now, but on His Father's throne, which no mere man can ever sit upon (Rev. iii. 21); and He reigns, distinctly, as rejected by the world: "Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thy foes Thy footstool" (Ps. cx. 1). Thus the saints cannot reign now, except in unfaithfulness, in independence of their Lord Himself. The tree is thus anomalous, and the condition evil.

[2] A worse thing follows, which clearly connects with what precedes it here: "The Kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

Here the explanations ordinarily given are so generally in contradiction to the truth, that it will be well to look at them more particularly before attempting to develop this. Edersheim gives thus briefly the generally accepted view:—

"To this *extensive* power of the Kingdom [as shown in the Mustard-seed] corresponded its *intensive* character, whether in the world at large or in the individual. This formed the subject of the last of the parables addressed at that time to the people—that of the Leaven. We need not here resort to ingenious methods of explaining the 'three measures,' or *seahs*, of meal in which the leaven was hid . . . To mix three measures of meal was common in Biblical, as well as in later times (Gen. xviii. 6; Judg. vi. 19; 1 Sam. i. 24). Nothing further was therefore conveyed than the common process of ordinary, every-day life. And in this, indeed, lies the very point of the parable, that the Kingdom of God, when received within, would seem like leaven hid, but would gradually pervade, assimilate, and transform the whole of our common life."

Alford's view is similar, but he adds:—

"Leaven has its good as well as its bad side, and for that good is used: viz., to make wholesome and fit for use that which would otherwise be heavy and insalubrious. Another striking point of comparison is that leaven, as used ordinarily, is a piece of the leavened loaf put among the new dough, just as the Kingdom of heaven is the renewal of humanity by the righteous Man, Christ Jesus."

Lange still adds:—

"The woman is an apt figure of the Church. Leaven, a substance kindred, yet quite opposed to meal,—having the power of transforming and preserving it, and converting it into bread, thus representing the divine in its relation to, and influence upon, our natural life. One of the main points of the parable is the 'hiding,' or the mixing of the leaven in the three measures of meal. This refers to the great visible Church, in which the living gospel seems, as it were, hidden and lost. It appears as if the gospel were engulfed in the world; but under the regenerating power of Christianity it will at last be seen that the whole world shall be included in the Church."

Trench remarks:—

"In and through the Church the Spirit's work proceeds; only as that dwells in the Church is it able to mingle a nobler element in the mass of humanity, in the world. The woman *took* the leaven from elsewhere to mingle it with the lump; and even such is the gospel, a kingdom not of this world, not the unfolding of any powers which already existed therein, a kingdom not rising, as the

of heaven is like unto [h]leaven, which a [i]woman took and [j]hid in [k]three measures of meal, till the [l]whole was leavened.

[h] *cf.* Lev. 2. 11. *cf.* Ex. 12. 15. *cf.* ch. 16. 6.
[i] *cf.* Eph. 5. 24; *cf.* 2 Cor. 11. 2; *cf.* Rev. 17. 1-6.
[j] *cf.* ver. 25; *cf.* Gal. 2. 4; *cf.* Gal. 3. 1; *cf.* Eph. 4. 14.
[k] *cf.* Num. 15. 8, 9 with John 6. 32-35.
[l] *cf.* 1 Cor. 5. 6; *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 33; *cf.* Gal. 5. 6-9.

secular kingdom, 'out of the earth' (Dan. vii. 17), but a new power brought into the world from above: not a philosophy, but a revelation."

This is a sufficiently full account of the most widely accepted interpretation; and, if not absolutely harmonious in detail, as presented by these different writers, it is still as much so as it would be reasonable to expect, and has in itself a very reasonable appearance. From the Scriptural point of view, however, it must be judged; and it has been often pointed out that in this way there are insurmountable difficulties to our receiving it.

In the first place, it is contrary to the general tenor of the previous parables. After all that has been before us, we do not expect a change so sudden and complete as this seems to involve. If the three measures of meal speak of humanity in general, or the world, the progress of the leaven is distinctly declared to be, "till the whole is leavened." But the other parables, from the very first one, are entirely against this; and the whole witness of prophecy as to the Christian dispensation. To apply it, as some would, simply to the work of regeneration in individuals, destroys in another way its harmony with the series of pictures of which it forms a part, all of which give us the public and general history. "Three measures of meal" seems a strange figure for the world, and the "measure" seems not realizable. Not that this would be a weighty objection with the many who deprecate any particular attention to such minutiæ as they would consider this. For such, a *general* resemblance is all that one need expect: which would leave in result a large uncertainty of interpretation, and Scripture to the reproach of many unmeaning words.

The signification of "leaven" in every other passage in which it is used is a great difficulty also. The Lord applies it to the "doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees" (chap. xvi. 12), and to their hypocrisy (Luke xii. 1). He speaks also of the "leaven of Herod" (Mark viii. 15); the apostle again of the "leaven of malice and wickedness" and of "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1 Cor. v. 8). Twice we are warned how "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (1 Cor. v. 6; Gal. v. 9). That very piece of old dough which Dean Alford interprets so strangely of the Lord's humanity, the apostle applies in quite another manner, when he bids the Corinthians "purge out, therefore, the *old* leaven, that ye may be a new lump," and this where he is interpreting the Old Testament feast of unleavened bread in its connection with the passover, and which must remind us how absolutely leaven was to be excluded from every "offering of the Lord made by fire" (Lev. ii. 11).

It will be urged in answer to this that it is the Kingdom of heaven itself which is here compared to leaven, and the Kingdom of heaven cannot be evil. But we have to go no further than these parables themselves to perceive that this objection cannot be sustained. In the very next one, if we interpret in a similar way, the Kingdom is compared to the treasure which a man found, but in that which follows, not to the pearl which corresponds to this, but to the merchantman who seeks it. Evidently, the whole parable it is which is the similitude of the Kingdom, and not separately either treasure or finder: and this is completely confirmed upon examination.*

In this way, too, it will be seen that, while the Kingdom of heaven cannot indeed in itself be evil, it may still be in an evil condition. This series of parables have surely exhibited in it a steady growth of evil, which in that of the mustard seed affects the form which as a whole it takes. We may naturally expect, therefore, to find here this development going on; and if, as Edersheim

* See also chap. xviii. 23; xx. 1.

3 (34, 35): things hidden manifest.

3. All these things spake Jesus unto the multitudes in parables, and without a parable spake he nothing unto

and others truly say, the leaven in contrast with the mustard-tree gives us intensive character rather than extensive growth, then we may expect to find this inward character affected now in a way corresponding to the outward form before. And this is in fact the meaning of the leaven: it is an energy, but alas, of evil from without, which transforms the character more and more of what it works upon, and completes the sorrowful picture of decline at which we have been looking. From this point of view also, all the details of the picture assume significance, and give a definiteness of meaning to the whole which vindicates the parable from the reproach of ambiguity or of useless verbiage.

The safest of rules that we can have is to let scripture be the interpreter of scripture. Now, if in carrying this out we ask ourselves, what leaven put into the meal may mean, we are at once reminded of the meat or *meal-offering*, as to which it is distinctly said (Lev. ii. 11): "No meat-offering which ye shall bring unto the Lord shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven . . . in any offering of the Lord made by fire." If then this be the application here, at once we see that the parable falls into line with the previous parables in this that it continues that thought of evil and opposition to the Word which they all more or less exhibit. *The woman is doing what the word of God prohibits:* she is putting leaven into the meal-offering.

But what, then, is the significance of this? A terrible one indeed: for the meal-offering speaks, as these offerings in general do, of Christ as the food of His people, of which they partake in communion with God (see Lev. ii., *notes*); and thus we see that to bring in the merely natural thought (whether it be true or not) of the wholesomeness of leavened bread, as Alford does, is most misleading. God insists upon the feast being kept to Him with *un*leavened bread: all mixture with leaven is adulteration; and if the Church, as Trench with Lange and others rightly says, is intended by the woman, then the professing church is here seen as adulterating the pure doctrine of Christ, the bread of life, with impure admixture.

"*Three measures* of meal:" does that add nothing to the significance? Is it merely, as Edersheim says, the usual quantity, and is that what his texts suggest? Not, surely, to one who is accustomed to see the New Testament in the Old, and to read the histories contained in it, as the apostle does that of Abraham (Gal. iv.) as types and prophecies of spiritual things. In this way it is most instructive to observe that Gideon's ephah of flour, which is the equivalent of "three measures" was offered to the Lord; and that Hannah likewise brought her ephah to the house of the Lord in Shiloh. The third case he adduces (and the only other) is still more in point: for Abraham's food with which he entertains his heavenly visitants was undoubtedly overruled, at least, to show us again Christ in His Person and work (three measures of fine meal and the calf—life sacrificed) as the means of communion between heaven and earth.* "*Three* measures" are the full divine measure, God in manifestation, and that is the right measure surely of the true Meat-offering, the Man Christ Jesus.

How all this brings out what is before us! Christ, the bread of life, is what the professing church has had entrusted to her for her own sustenance and for the blessing of others. The doctrine of Christ is her most precious deposit, and the maintaining this in purity her great responsibility. Alas, she has adulterated it with leaven: the Lord's own explanation of this as "the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees" and the "leaven of Herod," remains still for us in Christian times as wherewith to interpret His parable of the Kingdom. Formalism, ritualism, rationalism, the corrupting tendencies of world-pandering

*These are not random or fragmentary applications, but have their place in a history completely significant throughout, in which by the significance of the whole each part is certified (see Gen. xviii. *notes*).

them: so that that was [m]fulfilled which was spoken through the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables: I will utter things that have been hidden from the foundation of the world.

[m] Ps. 78. 2.

Herodianism, have all had their share in perverting the precious doctrine of Christ. And here distinctly the "woman's" form appears in that which Scripture itself stamps as "the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" (Rev. xvii.), she who, claiming to be emphatically the "CHURCH," at the same time assumes the power of adding to it her own authoritative interpretations. Doubtless she is not alone in this: others have followed her more or less distinctly, in claiming to give the "voice of the church," whether in the "catholic" or some lesser form. In whatever way this may be done it is an intrusion upon Christ's office as the only "Master* and Lord;" and wherever it is done, some kindred evil will spring out of it. Christ's voice, and that alone, must be authoritative for the soul.

The leaven is leavening the whole lump. No doubt, there is a present hindrance to this in the power of the Spirit working, and as long as the present purpose of God is not complete, the lump as a whole cannot be leavened. God will preserve His truth, which never has been as a whole allowed to be in the woman's hands to be leavened. Once let the true Church be removed, the truth of God will be removed with it, and the leaven of falsehood do its fatal work upon all that is left.

3. With this the parables spoken to the multitude are ended: and except in parables He did not speak to them. The prophet's word was being fulfilled in Him (Ps. lxxviii. 2): He was taking the place of another Asaph, to speak of things more deeply hidden than those of which Asaph spoke. The psalmist's words therefore are not exactly but freely quoted: *his* deep things were contained in a past history, the meaning of which it is given to him to utter; Christ's in a history of things to come, but which mournfully reflect in their general lesson that older story of another people. Alas, man's history *does* repeat itself: now, however, it was of a state of "things hidden from the foundation of the world"—of which the prophets of the Old Testament themselves knew nothing.

Sec. 2.

The Lord now leaves the multitude and goes into the house: the audience is changed, and He is now with His disciples only, and able to speak out. He does now give them the explanation of the parable of the darnel, carrying it further also than the parable itself had done. But to this he adds three other parables, the third of which He partially explains, but not the others. We are left to spiritual apprehension to discern these.

Between these last three and the first four we shall find the difference which the numbers indicate. Four is the number of the world, and they are spoken *in* the world—before the multitude. We find in them, in fact, what we can see to be the external aspect of things,—the Kingdom in the form which it has taken manifestly, even though those who see it may discern little of its import. In what is said to the disciples in the house we shall find what is for those of the present time only spiritually discerned,—what is not public fact, but either lies beyond Christian times, or else is of such a nature as only to be understood by those who have learned it from God, from His word. It is faith's view, then, that we now are to be occupied with, and it need not be a strange thing to us to find that we have very different interpretations to consider, and which it will be necessary to consider seriously, before we shall be entitled to speak with conviction upon the subject.

[1] But first of all we have what is itself an explanation. The interpretation of the parable of the darnel finds its place with the last three parables, and for this

* "Teacher" (John xiii. 13).

SECTION 2. (36-52.)
Faith's view.

[1] (36-43): the beginning of the reign of righteousness.

[1] Then, having sent the [n] multitudes away, he went into the house; and his disciples came and said unto him, [o] Explain unto us the parable of the darnel of the field. And he answered and said, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; and the field is the world, and the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the sons of the evil one are the darnel; and the enemy that sowed it is the devil; and the harvest is the [p] completion of the age, and the reapers are angels. As then the darnel is gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be at the completion of the age. The Son of man shall send his angels, and they shall [q] gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and those committing lawlessness, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; *there* shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the [r] righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears let him hear.

[n] ver. 2. *cf.* Lk. 10. 23, 24.
[o] Mk. 4. 13, 33, 34.
[p] *cf.* ch. 24. 3, etc.
[q] *cf.* Lk. 17. 26-37.
[r] *cf.* Col. 3. 4. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 5-10.

there must be some special reason. It would not be enough to say, it is an interpretation; for the Lord had before this explained that of the sower apart to His disciples, without reserving it for the after-teaching in the house. The true reason seems to be in that which is manifest in it, that it goes beyond the parable itself, and therefore beyond the end of the *Christian* form of the Kingdom of heaven. It presents, therefore, what must be to us as long as we are down here a matter of faith simply: and thus it comes into the second section here, and finds its place with the last three parables.

The parable ends with the gathering of the wheat into the barn. The saints of the present are removed, while the darnel, the fruit of Satan's sowing, is left in the field—in the world; bound in bundles for the burning, but not burnt. It is noticeable that there is nothing else but this mentioned now. There are no mere lifeless professors, but only the followers of false doctrine,—the reason for which is an unspeakably solemn one, as explained by the apostle in the second epistle to the Thessalonians: the mere professors will be swept off by that "strong delusion" which will come with the apostasy of the last days upon all that "have not received the love of the truth that they might be saved" (ii. 7-12). The public judgment here is upon those in manifest rebellion, not upon what is hidden but what is manifest. The words in the epistle are decisive as to this.

It is with what takes place after the saints are taken home that the interpretation of the parable has mainly to do: "As then the darnel is gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be at the completion of the age. The Son of man shall send His angels, and they shall gather out of *His Kingdom*"—it is now *His* Kingdom, He is not simply sitting on the Father's throne—"all things that offend, and those committing lawlessness, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: *there* shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father."

Notice the contrast: the Kingdom of the Son of man below, the Kingdom of the Father above: the righteous *reign* in the Kingdom of the Son of man; they *shine* in the Kingdom of their Father. The Sun of righteousness is risen upon the earth; and this is why the righteous shine as the Sun: they are with Him, sharers of His glory; not suns—central, independent orbs,—but lustrous with the glory put upon them. But this carries us, as is plain, beyond the present form of the Kingdom, as also we shall find the parable of the net does. For us,

2 (44): preserved and reserved.

2 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto [s]treasure hid in the [t]field, which a man having found, hath hid,

[s] *cf.* Ex. 19. 5. *cf.* Deut. 4. 20.
[t] *cf.* Deut. 32. 8, 9, 10; *cf.* ver. 38.

to whom all these parables of the Kingdom belong, it is a matter of faith alone. The numerical symbolism stamps this, I doubt not, as what it so plainly is, the beginning of the reign of righteousness.

2 We come now to two parables which ought, by their evident likeness to one another, to render mutual help in their interpretation — the parables of the treasure and the pearl. They are commonly understood by Christians as portraying in somewhat different ways the value of Christianity or of Christian blessings, and the need of sacrificing all else in order to secure them. But we must take them separately.

"Again, the Kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in the field, which a man having found hath hid, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

An old note of Luther gives what is still the common view: "The hidden treasure is the gospel, which bestows upon us all the riches of free grace, without any merit of our own. Hence also the joy when it is found, and which consists in a good and happy conscience, that cannot be obtained by works. The gospel is likewise the pearl of great price."

"True Christianity," says Lange, "is ever again like an unexpected discovery, even in the ancient Church: the best possession we can find, a gift of free grace. Every one must find and discover Christianity for himself. In order to secure possession, even of what we have found without any merit of our own, we must be willing to sacrifice all; for salvation, though entirely of free grace, requires the fullest self-surrender."

He is naturally perplexed, however, about the purchase of the field, to get the treasure. His solution of the difficulty is so strange that it can only be of value as showing to what strange methods people have to resort to interpret consistently: "If 'the field' refers to external worldly ecclesiasticism, the expression might mean that we were not to carry the treasure out of the visible Church, as if we were stealing it away, but that we should purchase the field in order to have full title to the possession hid in it. Accordingly it would apply against sectarianism." It is hardly worth while to go further.

In fact the interpretation is scarcely scriptural in any part. A man like Luther may speak of "buying" the riches of free grace, and so, no doubt, does Scripture; but it never speaks of selling all that one has to do it. God says rather, "Come ye, buy wine and milk *without* money and *without* price." And the Lord does indeed say, "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple" (Luke xiv. 33); but He has taught us elsewhere how to understand all such expressions, and that the would-be disciple does not by this "buy" the grace of God, but must receive that grace first to enable for such whole-hearted discipleship. Not "whosoever will lose his life," in *order* to find it, but he who does so "*for My sake*, shall find it" (chap. xvi. 25). For "though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not *love*, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Cor. xiii. 3). Love must be the motive power, or there is nothing that can count; but then we cannot *love* in order to gain for ourselves by it: there is but one way of acquiring it, and that is, as flame lights flame. So love alone kindles love: "we love Him, because He first loved us" (1 Jno. iv. 19).

To sell all that one has to buy the free grace of God is not according to the gospel: that alone wrecks this interpretation; but, if we inquire further, What is the "*field*" that is bought to get the treasure? the Lord has Himself answered, not with Dr. Lange that it is "external worldly ecclesiasticism"—a strange thing indeed to buy at such a cost!—but the "world," simply the *world*. That is the field in which the Word is sown, clearly; ecclesiasticism may spring up in it, but only after the sowing, and must always be a very different thing.

and for joy thereof goeth and [u]selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

[u] *cf.* Is. 53. 4-10. *cf.* Ps. 22. 1. *cf.* 2 Cor. 8. 9.

But, if "the field is the world," are we to sell all we have to buy the world, to find the gospel in it? That is mere absurdity, of course.

This interpretation breaking down, then, it only remains to reverse the order of thought, and find in it the Saviour seeking the sinner, instead of the sinner seeking the Saviour. Divine love is first and worthiest: and then how the central figure here shines out! HE went and sold all that He had—"emptied Himself," as the word in Philippians literally is (ii. 7, *R. V.*): "though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. viii. 9). Texts are easy enough to find in this direction, and simple enough, too, in application. Here is a view of the Kingdom which lies outside of the range of the first four parables, as the continuation of the second parable does, but antecedent, not consequent to them. But it is the foundation upon which all rests, and which could not be omitted from faith's view of things. It is the fundamental view of the Kingdom itself, and now its being the field of the world that *He* buys, instead of being out of place, or difficult to understand, is most exactly accordant and most perfectly intelligible. "Even denying the Lord that bought them" is said of those who bring in "damnable heresies," and bring upon themselves swift destruction (2 Pet. ii. 1). They are not, therefore, of His *redeemed* (for redemption involves the forgiveness of sins, (Eph. i. 7,) and is much more than purchase); nor of the treasure, therefore, for which He buys the field; but they are purchased, as all the world is purchased, and He is Lord over them: the word used here being not the usual title of authority, but "*despot*" (δεσπότης), "owner."

The world, then, belongs to Him, and the treasure He has found in it, and for which He buys it, must be His people, who are therefore His purchased ones, the people of His possession (Acts xx. 28; 1 Pet. ii. 9, *Gk.*). Yet there are still points of difficulty about this parable, if we apply it to Christians now, as is usual and natural with those who accept the interpretation which we must believe to be the true one. For, according to this view, neither the (implied) first hiding, nor the finding, nor the re-hiding of the treasure is accounted for, and even the buying of the field does not seem fully explained, though the meaning of it in itself is clear enough. But beyond all this the parable that follows it, so similar, and which yet cannot be so close a repetition of it as it appears, needs explanation. We must go on, therefore, to this and compare the two together, before we can get a satisfactory view of the whole matter.

[3] Here "the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls; and when he had found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

Such interpretations as those of Lange need not long detain us, since they are but slight variations of what we have, in the case of the former parable, already rejected. "The following points," says Lange, "are plain: he who obtains the Kingdom of heaven is no longer represented, merely as a fortunate finder, but at the same time as an untiring searcher. He is consciously seeking and striving after goodly pearls, or precious spiritual goods. At the same time what was formerly described as a treasure is now characterized as a pearl of great price: it is presented in a concentrated form as the *one* thing needful, bright and glorious in its appearance,—*i. e.*, the person of Christ and life in Him, are now all in all. Accordingly, all former possessions are readily surrendered." Surely, one would not expect two parables to present things no wider apart than these; and the buying of Christ after this manner is an unscriptural thought. If we have had to refuse, moreover, the similar interpretation of the treasure, the parallel features in the two forbid our acceptance of dissimilar explanations for them. If Christ be the Finder of the one parable, He must be also the Seeker in the other.

But why, then, the two parables? If Christ be the central Figure in each

3 (45, 46): His own and for His glory.

3 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, [v] seeking goodly pearls; and when he had

[v] *cf.* Lk. 19. 10. *cf.* Jno. 15. 16.

case, there must be surely difference as to the object before Him; but the general thought of those who accept this view is that it is only one and the same object, though differently presented: "The parable of the hidden treasure," it is said, "did not sufficiently convey what the saints are to Christ. For the treasure might consist of a hundred thousand pieces of gold and silver. And how would this mark the blessedness and beauty of the Church? The merchantman finds 'one pearl of great price.' The Lord does not see merely the preciousness of the saints, but the unity and heavenly beauty of the assembly. Every saint is precious to Christ; but He 'loved the Church and gave Himself for it.'"

This, however, does not adequately distinguish between the two parables, and indeed passes over entirely some of the most conspicuous differences between them. One cannot understand, if this be all, why the "pearl" should not by itself suffice for both.

That the pearl is the Church is indeed capable of fullest demonstration. If, then, the Church, the *heavenly* object, be pictured in the second parable, does not this naturally raise the question whether the "treasure hid in the field" of the *world* is not intended to mark a contrast in this respect? If so, and in connection with the Kingdom of heaven, our thoughts are at once directed to *Israel* as brought before us in the treasure. Let us examine the possibility of such an application, and see whether it may not help us with regard to some of the otherwise unexplained differences between the two parables.

We have seen that the Kingdom was first announced to Israel. But they rejected the King, and on this account it passed from them. This is, no doubt, why the thought of Israel being before us here has not been more frankly entertained. The parables are "mysteries" of the Kingdom: but is not Israel's rejection from that which according to Old Testament prophecy belongs to her (and which shall be yet hers in a day to come) *part of these very mysteries?* The words of the apostle of the Gentiles seem to be clearly in the affirmative with regard to this. He says: "For I would not have you to be ignorant of *this mystery*, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that *blindness in part is happened unto Israel*, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in" (Rom. xi. 25). Thus he names the very thing which has caused the rejection of Israel for the present time as among the mysteries of this time. Is it not, then, antecedently probable enough that among these parables Israel's relation to the Kingdom should be found to have a place?

When we look at the parable again, we cannot but be confirmed in this. To Israel it was promised that if they obeyed Jehovah's voice, and kept His covenant, then they should be a peculiar treasure unto Him above all people (Ex. xix. 5); and the psalmist would wake up their praise by the recollection that "Jehovah hath chosen Jacob for Himself, and Israel for His peculiar treasure" (Ps. cxxxv. 4). Yet when the Lord came to His own this treasure as such was hid in the field of the world,—as it were, lost among the nations. He discovered it, but could not possess Himself of it. He must first purchase it as at the cross, where Caiaphas' unconscious prophecy declared He would "die for the nation" (John xi. 51). We see also why the field must be bought: it is in the *world* that Israel is yet to be displayed as Jehovah's treasure. But the purchase being made, there is nothing further done as to possession: here the parable stops; the end of this belongs not to the "mysteries;" and in the meanwhile another purpose comes into sight, and is the very thing of which the next parable certainly bears witness.

Thus the interpretation in this way fairly and fully unlocks the whole parable; and a scriptural interpretation which does this must needs be the true one; for if not,—if two interpretations, equally consistent, could be given of the same words, then the words would not distinguish, would be defective in

found [w]one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it. [w] *cf.* Eph. 5. 25-27. *cf.* Rev. 21. 21.

significance, as the Lord's words could not be. We would have no means of discerning between the true and the false: a conclusion which would be the destruction of the power and authority of Scripture: for that whose meaning cannot be known ceases by that fact to have authority.

In the pearl of great price it is no wonder that Christians should imagine the Lord to be intended. But it is the Church which is thus spoken of, and its preciousness is not only insisted on, but in measure explained also. Its value is estimated by One who knows fully what it is He values. It is now not merely a man who finds, but a merchant who is seeking goodly pearls. The thing he finds he is in pursuit of, and with the practised eye of the skilled observer. Notice, too, that it is intimated that there are other pearls. This is one, however, whose value is such that, having found it, he will sell all he has to buy it.

But what is a pearl? It is, first of all, the product of a living being: it is the only jewel, as far as I am aware, that is so; and this is the first thing, surely, that we are intended to realize in it.

A pearl is the result of injury done to the animal that produces it. Its material is the *nacre*, as it is called, or "*mother* of pearl," which lines the interior of the shell, and which is renewed by it as often as injured or worn away. A particle of sand getting between the animal and the shell, the irritation causes a deposit of nacre upon it, which goes on being deposited, layer after layer, till a pearl is formed. But "completely spherical pearls"—and these are the valuable ones—"can only be formed loose in the muscle or soft parts of the animal. The Chinese obtain them artificially by introducing into the living mussel foreign substances, such as pieces of mother of pearl fixed to wires, which thus become coated with a more brilliant material."

The pearl is thus, as we may say, an answer to an injury; and it is the *offending object* that becomes, through the work of the injured one, a precious and beauteous gem. It is clothed with a comeliness put upon it, as the objects of divine grace are, with the beauty and glory of Him we crucified! It is in truth nothing else that He sought in coming among us but objects of divine grace.

Between a common pearl and one of great price, the difference is only of degree. The size and brilliancy depend, not upon the grain of sand which may be inwrapped, but upon the number of layers of nacre which inwrap it. The greatness of the grace bestowed is the distinguishing feature in what is here. Different bestowals of grace there are, and Scripture asserts this in the fullest way. The calling of Israel is not that of the Church, which is Christ's body; and though the departed saints of former dispensations will plainly be in heaven as we shall be, Scripture again makes a difference between "the Church of the first-born ones whose names are written in heaven," (Israel being the first-born upon *earth*) and the "spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. xii. 23). God is going "in the ages to come to show the *exceeding* riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 7).

Israel may be the treasure in the field, but the pearl speaks of *personal adornment*. Christ will have the Church in heaven with Himself, putting in the highest place what is to show most conspicuously the glory of His grace. It is *one* pearl; as the body of Christ is one. There cannot be, it is evident, another body of *Christ*. The "fullness" or complement "of Him that filleth all in all" admits of no other.

The treasure and the pearl both speak of what is faith's view as to the Kingdom, not the external view presented in the first four parables. In the treasure we find Israel preserved for blessing, but reserved, they having in the meanwhile rejected the only possible way in which it could be theirs. In the pearl we have that in which, during this reservation, the purpose of God as to the Church comes out. It is the first expression of it, and as yet we do not realize

[4] (47-52): the mercy to the world.

[4] Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a draw-net, cast into the [x]sea, and gathering of every kind: which when it was filled, they drew to shore and sat down and [y]gathered the good into vessels and cast the worthless away. So shall it be at the completion of the age: the angels shall go forth, and separate the wicked from among the righteous, and shall cast them into the [z]furnace of fire: *there* shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

[Jesus saith unto them],* Have ye [a]understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. And he said unto them, Therefore every scribe who is made a [b]disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like unto a householder that bringeth out of his treasure things [c]new and old.

x *cf.* Rev. 17. 15 with Gen. 1. 20-23.
y *cf.* ch. 25. 31-46.
z *cf.* Rev. 19. 20. ver. 42.
a *cf.* Jno. 16. 25-30.
b *cf.* ch. 11. 11.
c *cf.* Eph. 3. 3-5. *cf.* Song 7. 13.

* Omitted by some.

just what it is: as the "assembly which is His body," or even as "the house of God," it is not yet mentioned, but as people for Himself, destined to display His glory—the glory of His grace: heavenly, therefore, not earthly, the earthly promises being Israel's still. The revelation will, of course, become fuller as we go on. The light increases to the perfect day.

[4] Israel comes no more into this picture: all has been said about it that needs. The rest is told fully in the Old Testament prophets. What we have in the last parable here concerns neither Israel nor the Church, as is plain by the interpretation which our Lord Himself gives: it is the mercy to the Gentiles, after the purpose of God as to the Church is complete. A new gathering now begins with the net cast into the sea, the figure of the Gentile nations. It gathers of every kind, and is then drawn to shore, and the sorting of the good from the bad is by angel-hands alone. This is at the completion of the age, and while coincident with the final harvesting of the wheat-field, is a different thing from it. To the present time it cannot apply: the putting the fish into denominational vessels, as some have applied it, is not a possible thought here: for *we* are not in the "completion of the age,"* which is, as our Lord explains, the time of harvest; and the sorting in this case is not by human but angelic hands.

The net applies to the going out of the "everlasting gospel," as in Rev. xiv. 6, 7, after the Church is removed to heaven, and where the terms of it show at once the difference between it and the gospel at the present time. We cannot say, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the *hour of His judgment is come*," and on the other hand the grace which it is ours to proclaim is infinitely fuller. The issue of what is here is, no doubt, seen in the separative judgment of the *living*, when the Lord appears, as shown forth in the "sheep" and "goats" of the twenty-fifth chapter. In the wheat-field of Christendom there will be at the end no separation of the wicked from among the righteous, but the righteous will be gathered first of all, and removed to heaven; after which nothing but the darnel will remain to be gathered and burnt. With the fish here and the sheep and goats in the later chapter, there is a true judicial separation of the "sheep from the goats," the wicked departing into everlasting fire, and the righteous left for blessing upon earth under the "Shepherd" rule of the Son of man now come.

This is the end of the parables of the Kingdom; and the Lord's words that follow to His disciples are self-evident in their application to them. New things have been declared and put in connection with the old; all the latter part being

* The full explanation of this term will be given in the notes on the twenty-fourth chapter, where the whole prophecy relates to it. The "end of the world" is a wrong translation.

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chap. xiii. 53–xiv.)

Features of a day of rejection.

1 (xiii. 53-xiv. 12): Men alike in rejecting.
1 (xiii. 53-58): the pride that refuses conviction.

1. [1] And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence. And coming into his [d]own country, he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were [e]astonished and said, Whence hath this [man] this wisdom and these works of power? Is not this the [f]carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary, and his brethren James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? and his sisters, are they not all with us? whence hath this [man], then, all these things? And they were [g]offended at him. But Jesus said unto

d ch. 2. 23. Mk. 6. 1-6. Lk. 4. 16-30.
e cf. Jno. 7. 15.
f Jno. 6. 42. *cf.* Jno. 7. 41, 48, 52. *cf* Is. 49. 7.
g cf. 1 Cor. 1. 22, 23. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8.

such an adjustment. The scribe of the old dispensation, becoming now the disciple of the new, is brought into the fullness of the whole revelation of God.

SUBD. 2.

We return now to the personal history of the Lord, but to find in it also the foreshadow of such things as the parables have put before us. The fact of His rejection by man is now a governing thought; and this involves rejection for His people, and a path in separation from a world in estrangement from Him. This is especially what characterises the next portion of the Gospel which developes for us the features of a day of rejection, but in which grace still works, and finds among men not its objects only but its instruments. But the world is at the same time on the one hand a desert, on the other a stormy sea. Soon He Himself also is absent, and His disciples are left in the darkness, toiling over the waters in the face of the adverse wind. But again there is a change: He is coming back to them over the waters; and faith, discerning Him and seeking to be with Him, is fain to leave the boat and at His invitation walk upon the waters too to go to Him. Here the Church's path is clearly presented to us, the boat imaging the position of that remnant of Israel which as to their hopes the disciples were, when He went away, and to which (accompanied by His heavenly people) He will again return. Then the wind ceases, and the boat having reached the shore, mercy flows out to men far and wide as it will in millennial days. Let us now seek to apprehend this in detail.

1. First of all, we have a two-fold witness to His rejection. All classes of men are concerned in this: for the reception of Christ alike wounds their pride and opposes their lust; and thus Christ Himself and he who would prepare His way must share together.

[1] First, Nazareth rejects Him,—the place where He had been so long, and where the glory of a life to which all else was darkness had shone before their eyes. They have perforce to own His wisdom and His mighty work; but what right has He to them? They know His mother and His kindred; and these suggest no such greatness. They ought surely to have argued therefore that all this in Him was not natural but supernatural—that there was more in Him than nature could account for: but no! they will rather discredit what they see and know, than accept such things from a carpenter's son. Divine power must not work without human credentials. The root is out of a dry ground: the plant may be anything you please, but it is a sufficient condemnation of it that the ground is dry.

That was His glory for which they despised Him. He was no creature of His circumstances; He derived not from man, He received no honor from him. Nor could He thus, on His part, put honor on man, nor accredit him who had fallen away from God. He could *serve*, and for this come into the lowest place, when from man He could not accept the highest. Those who had not judged aright the world or themselves, could not judge *Him* aright. And still the proverb holds that a prophet may be in honor anywhere rather than among those who

them, A [h]prophet is not without honor, save in his country and in his house. And he did not many mighty works there [i]because of their unbelief.

2 (xiv. 1-12): the opposition to men's lusts awakening enmity.

2 At that time, Herod the tetrach [j]heard the report concerning Jesus; and he said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist: he is risen from the dead, and therefore do these powers put forth energy in him. For Herod had [k]laid hold on John and bound him, and put him out of the way in prison, because of Herodias his brother Philip's wife: for John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her. And when he would have killed him, he [l]feared the multitude, because they held him for a prophet. But when Herod's birthday came,* the daughter of Herodias [m]danced in the midst, and pleased Herod; whereupon he promised with an [n]oath to give her whatsoever she might ask. But she, being incited by her mother, said, Give me here upon a dish the head of John the Baptist. And though the king was [o]grieved, [yet] on account of his oaths and those at table with him, he commanded it to be given. And he sent and [p]beheaded John in prison; and his head was brought upon a dish and given to the damsel, and she bare it to her mother. And his disciples came and took away the corpse, and buried it, and went and [q]brought word to Jesus.

h Jno. 4. 44. *cf.* 2 Ki. 5. 8.

i *cf.* ch. 17. 19, 20.

j Mk. 6. 14-29. Lk. 9. 7-9.

k Lk. 3. 19, 20. *cf.* Acts 7. 51-54.

l *cf.* ch. 21. 26.

m *cf.* Gen. 27. 1-5. *cf.* Dan. 3. 5. *cf.* Is. 5. 11, 12.

n *cf.* ch. 5. 33-37.

o *cf.* Prov. 29. 25. *cf.* Lk. 18. 23.

p *cf.* Acts 7. 52.

q *cf.* Jno. 1. 35-37. *cf.* Jno. 11. 21.

* Or, "was kept:" a difference of reading.

know him in his earthly relations best. Did not this for long dim the eyes even of His brethren (John vii. 5)? and does not its influence appear even in the tender solicitude of His mother?

So Nazareth shuts itself out from the blessing which was ready to be poured out upon them: "He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."

2 Prince and people were alike in this; and now we hear of the murder of the Baptist at the hands of the licentious Herod. Conscience he has, enough to trouble him; religion enough to bind him to the abominable wickedness in which he is ensnared by the evil influences to which he has already surrendered himself. The spirit of uncleanness is quite ready to take to himself other spirits more wicked than himself, and with the key of the house in his hand, it is too late to shut the door upon them. Scrupulous the adulterer may be as to his oath, and for his honor before those who are at table with him,—the poor remains of honor which are so apt to increase in value in proportion to the little left. So the death of the prophet is cheaply purchased by the dance of a light girl, and the king's oath is kept inviolate. What a world it is in every view that can be taken of it, whether in its pleasures, its morals, or its underlying passions and malignities! In such a world what an honor to be persecuted! what a reproach to be in esteem! The Spirit of God sums it up morally thus: "*All* that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," and adds that "it is not of the Father" (1 John ii. 16). The *Father* has been seen and hated in the Son (John xv. 23, 24).

2. The Lord accepts the news of the Baptist's murder as His own rejection. He withdraws into a desert place apart; but those who are drawn to Him by their necessities flock after Him still, and He cannot withdraw Himself from the need which appeals to Him. The wilderness thus becomes a place of plenteous provision, and the Lord's grace and power are manifest for all that come.

2 (xiv. 13–21): Ministry in the place of rejection.

2. But when Jesus heard it, he [r]withdrew from thence by ship into a desert place apart; and when the multitudes heard it, they followed him on foot out of the cities. And he went out and saw a great multitude, and had [s]compassion on them, and healed their infirm. And when even was come, the disciples came to him, saying, The place is desert, and the time already gone by: dismiss the multitudes, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves food. But Jesus said unto them, They have no need to go away: [t]give ye them to eat. But they say unto him, We have here but [u]five loaves and two fishes. And he said, Bring them hither to [v]me. And he commanded the multitudes to recline upon the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and [w]blessed and brake, and gave the loaves to his [x]disciples, and the disciples to the multitudes. And all ate,

r ch. 12. 15. Mk. 6. 32–46. Lk. 9. 10–17.
s ch. 9. 36.
t *cf.* ch. 10. 8. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 5, 6.
u Jno. 6. 1–14. *cf.* 1 Cor. 14. 19. *cf.* Ex. 4. 2.
v *cf.* ch. 17. 17. *cf.* 1 Ki. 17. 8–16.
w Jno. 6. 23. *cf.* Jno. 11. 41, 42.
x *cf.* 1 Cor. 11. 24.
x ver. 16.

He heals all the infirm among them; and as night comes on, and the disciples remind Him of the need of the multitude there in a desert place, He casts them for all this upon the disciples themselves: "They have no need to go away," He says, "give ye them to eat." But they do not realize what this implies, and that they can avail themselves of His power for ministry such as this. They have but five loaves and two fishes: how plainly we may read ourselves in them! What use to put such a pitiful morsel even into *His* hand to satisfy so many with! But He does not disdain it, or set it aside, to work independently. If a miracle were in His mind, this might seem more worthy of Him; but on the contrary He will rather lower the miracle than set aside those whom He would identify with Himself and use in service. They are to find the little that they have, enough, if but His blessing be with it; and so are we.

But they are to bring it to Him first, and to receive it from Him; and then He bids the multitude recline upon the grass: His way is to give rest and then refreshment. Then He blesses and breaks, and puts it back into His disciples' hands to distribute; and they distribute it all; and there is more than enough for all the multitude. How good to know that out of that insignificant quantity there is positively enough for *every one there;* yea, and more than enough: "twelve handbaskets full of fragments that remained" over and above all that had been eaten! Thus there is actually more left than they had had at the beginning; and this is constantly the way of spiritual increase, scattering and yet increasing. Would that we all and always remembered it:—the responsibility of the possession of whatever ministers to the need of man, but above all, of that which ministers to what is truly life,—and then the gain resulting. Every particle of truth we have, brings with it corresponding responsibility, proportionate privilege, and opportunity of greater gain. "To him that *hath* shall more be given, and he shall have abundantly; and from him that *hath not*, even that which he *hath*"—hath and hath not, hath as if he had it not, without practical use or advantage—"shall be taken away."

Such grace was still going forth in Israel: the power of Jehovah was manifesting itself among them, to "satisfy her poor with bread" (Ps. cxxxii. 15). The *twelve* baskets full may point to the resources of power for them in the presence among them of their King; the five thousand men, the responsibility of such realized capabilities (5×10^3), which yet unbelief might make of no effect. And this is in fact the result. The stream of grace that was flowing then could not, indeed, be dammed back by all that unbelief could do, but it might be forced to flow in other channels; and this was in fact the result. The Gospel of John

and were filled; and they took up of the fragments that [y] remained twelve hand-baskets full. And those that ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

3 (xiv. 22-33): separation by the apprehension of the Lord.

3. And immediately he compelled his disciples to go on board ship, and go before him to the other side, until he should send the multitudes away. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into the [z] mountain apart to pray; and when even was come, he was there alone. But the ship was already in the midst of the sea, [a] distressed by the waves, for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night he went toward them, walking upon the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking upon the sea, they were [b] troubled, saying, It is an apparition; and they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good [c] courage: it is I; be not afraid.

y *cf.* 2 Ki. 4. 1-7, 42-44. *cf.* ch. 15. 27.

z Mk. 6. 46. *cf.* Lk. 5. 16.

a Mk. 6. 47-52. Jno. 6. 16-21.

b *cf.* Lk. 24. 36-40.

c *cf.* Jno. 14. 27. *cf.* Jno. 16. 33.

it is which gives us insight (chap. vi.) into the spiritual condition of those to whom the Lord ministered here, and to whom He had to say, "Ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles,"—not because ye realized divine power in them,—"but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled." These were they who would after this carnal manner, "have taken Him by force, to make Him a king" (ver. 15). Such was the nation; and, as such, He had to turn away from them.

3. We find Him therefore urging His disciples to re-enter the ship, and go before Him to the other side, while He Himself, having dismissed the multitudes, goes up into the mountain apart to pray. This is simple, as significant of His present place and work, Israel being in the meantime left to the consequences of their unbelief. Gone up to God, He intercedes for His own, tossed on the sea of this world, and with the wind contrary: for Satan is "the prince of the power of the air," by whom "the course of this world" is directed (Eph. ii. 2). The "ship" does not represent, however, what is proper to the present dispensation, but the means by which, when faith has not Christ before it, we are sustained upon the waters. Such means are essentially Jewish, no doubt, and it was practically a Jewish remnant which the Lord left upon earth when He went up, as it will be a Jewish remnant to which He will by and by return. The question put by the disciples to the Lord immediately before His going up, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" (Acts i. 6) shows how little beyond the national hope they were at this time. Long after, they "walked orderly," thronged the temple, and were "zealous of the law" (Acts xxi. 20, 24), and Paul it is who speaks the decisive word by which the Christian company separate themselves from the Jewish ship to take the true path of faith upon the waters.

The ship speaks not properly of help given to faith, but of help to do without it. "The law is not of faith," and in the notable chapter in which Paul insists to the Hebrews upon the path in which the elders walked, and in which they obtained a good report, it is striking how little the times of walking orderly and keeping the law furnish him with examples (Heb. xi.) Faith lives in the unseen and is built up by that which is spiritual, not natural. Nay, the mighty miracles of the wilderness did not beget a generation of believers, as we well know. The law, being the trial of man, gave every assistance to man naturally: the eye, the ear, the senses generally, through these the whole sensitive being, were appealed to,—only to end in more emphatic witness to his utter impracticability. The schoolmaster's reign, therefore, is at an end, though the lessons learnt abide: "after that faith is come, we are no longer under the schoolmaster" (Gal. iii. 25).

And Peter answered and said, Lord, if it be thou, [d]bid me come to thee upon the waters. And he said, Come. And Peter, having descended from the ship, walked on the waters to go to Jesus. But seeing the [e]wind strong, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he [f]cried out, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and took hold of him, and saith unto him, O thou of [g]little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they had gone up into the ship, the wind [h]ceased; and they that were in the ship worshiped him, saying, Thou art indeed the [i]Son of God.

4 (xiv. 34-36): the mercy to the world.

4. And when they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place recognized him, they sent into all that region round about, and they [j]brought unto him all that were sick. And they besought him that they might only [k]touch the border of his garment; and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

d *cf.* Heb. 13. 13.

e *cf.* Heb. 10. 32-34.

f Lk. 8. 24, 25.

g ch. 8. 26.

h *cf.* Ps. 107. 29, 30.

i *cf.* Ps. 46. 10. ch. 16. 16. Jno. 1. 49.

j Mk. 6. 53-56.

k *cf.* Lk. 5. 24-34.

Faith could not be more strikingly pictured than in this solitary man stepping out of the ship upon the waters to go to Jesus. And this has been in fact the Church's path ever since. True, the "ship" has come back again, with the return of Jewish principles with church establishments and the patronage of the world; but this has made the picture only a more striking one, by separating even disciples from disciples, and making the Church's path in result more absolutely the individual, isolated path, which for the saint, in character as such, it has ever been. Faith is, of necessity, personal and individual. A "Christian world" means only a corrupt and degenerate Church-profession. The Church itself, as well as the open world, becomes a scene in which the word of the Lord calls for "overcoming" and more and more appeals to the individual only,—to him "that hath an ear to hear" (Rev. ii., iii.).

Indeed, this Figure on the water is not seen except by faith; even those who are disciples may count it an "apparition" only, and fear, instead of being drawn by it. Notice, that it is to the soul that *invites the invitation* that the Voice says, "Come." It speaks to no other. Nor does it speak other than approvingly, though the one inviting it proves thoroughly his weakness in his response to it. But he gets no rebuke for a rash venture. The other disciples might have given him that: there are many who are in no danger of this kind of failure, who would justify themselves by it from all such attempts; but the Lord says only, "Wherefore didst thou *doubt?*" And surely this doubting is as foolish as disastrous. For the moment, at least, he had proved the power of Christ: he had actually walked upon the water, and why should boisterous winds put him now in fear? The power was not his own, and he might reckon on it as much for rough water as for smooth. But with the eye off Christ, one cannot reckon right. He doubts and he begins to sink; but at his cry there is a Hand outstretched to him, and he is held up. It is not the ship that rescues him, nor is he taken from the path, but *supported in it.* Good is it to remember and realize this as grace which acts towards us in our failure now.

Peter and his Lord come back to the ship together; then the wind ceases, and those in the ship come and worship Him with the acknowledgment, "Indeed Thou art the Son of God." This is again not difficult to understand; for when He returns to Israel, we shall be with Him still, and for them and us the wind will be at rest. Satan's power will be over, himself shut up in the bottomless pit, the power of Christ supreme over all.

4. We see now therefore in Gennesaret the mercy flowing out which will characterize this blessed time. "Gennesaret" may even mean "the protection of

SUBDIVISION 3. (Chap. xv.-xvi. 12.)

The heart of man manifested, and God's heart told out: the way of sanctification.

1 (xv. 1-20): Commandments of God and traditions of men.

1. THEN come to Jesus Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the [l]tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the [m]commandment of God for your tradition? For God commanded, saying, [n]Honor thy father and thy mother, and he that speaketh ill of father or mother, let him [o]die the death. But *ye* say, Whosoever shall say unto his father or his mother, It is a [p]gift, that by which thou mightest have been profited by me, he shall in no wise honor his

l Mk.7.1-23. *cf.* ch.23.16-18.
m cf. ch. 23. 23. *cf.* Jno. 18. 28. *ctr.* Rom.3. 31.
n Ex. 20. 12. *cf.* Jer. 35. 18, 19.
o Lev. 20. 9. Deut.27.16. Prov.30.17. *cf.* 1 Tim.5. 4, 8.
p ctr. ch. 5. 23, 24.

the prince." Sickness and distress are banished by the presence of the "Prince of life." It is but the shadow; what will the reality be?

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We are now shown in the teachings of Israel's leaders the blindness of man's heart, both as to man himself, and as to the way of blessing for him. The one error of course involves the other, and it is an error, not of the mind only, but of the heart as well. The heart is in fact what is in question everywhere as to man—teacher or taught: out of the heart all evil comes, and dealing with the outside will not help it. Sanctification is not an external thing; and it can only be learnt, moreover, in the sanctuary,—in the presence of God from whom man has deeply revolted. The prodigal must return to his Father; and God is ready to welcome him. Let him take but the place to which his need should bring him, he shall find that Heart that never has been alienated or indifferent poured out over him. This is seen in the person not of a privileged Jew, but of a Canaanitess; and then in Israel we find the table of the Lord spread, and the bounty with which He would attract wanderers to Himself. The closing section returns to that with which it began, and warns against the leaven of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

1. The question with which we begin is raised by themselves, by Pharisees and scribes from Jerusalem, the headquarters of all the religious opposition to the Lord. They come to Him directly with the inquiry, which of course is an accusation, and as a charge against His disciples, impliedly against Him their teacher: "Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread." They had here what in their minds convicted the disciples indeed as very manifest sinners; for the breach of such a tradition was with these men a greater sin than the breach of the law itself; nay, by a manifest perversion of Ex. xxxiv. 27, it was argued that this *oral* law it was that contained the terms of God's covenant with Israel,* and not the other.

Thus here was a challenge which the Lord could not allow to go unanswered. He answers them with another question, which even to themselves would destroy the authority to which they appealed, if they could not answer it: "Why do ye also transgress the *commandments of God* for your tradition?" And then He takes up the commandment to which in a special way God had been pleased to attach a promise for the observance of it, a signal punishment for disobedience to it, and shows how thoroughly their tradition left the door open to any who pleased, to violate it with impunity. A man had only to say it was "corban" —a gift to God—that by which he might have ministered to the need of his

*See Edersheim's "Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah," for much else and worse upon this subject.

father or his mother; and ye have made void the word of God for your tradition. Hypocrites! well did [q]Esaias prophesy of you, saying, "This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me: but in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines commands of men."

And having called unto him the multitude, he said unto them, Hear and understand: [r]not that which entereth into the mouth defileth the man; but that which [s]cometh out of the mouth, that defileth the man. Then

q Is. 29. 13. Ezek.33.31.

r Rom. 14. 14-23. *cf.*Col.2.20-23.

s *cf.* Jer. 17. 9, 10. *cf.* Rom. 3. 10-18. *cf.* Tit.1.15.

father or mother, to be completely excused from such a duty. "Of course, the 'Ten Words,'" says Edersheim, "were the Holy of Holies of the Law; nor was there any obligation more rigidly observed—indeed, carried in practice almost to the verge of absurdity,—than that of honor to parents. In both respects, then, this was a specially vulnerable point, and it might well be argued that if in this law Rabbinic ordinances came into conflict with the demands of God's word, the essential contrariety between them must indeed be great.

"It must not be thought that the pronunciation of the votive word 'Corban,' although meaning 'a gift' or 'given to God,' necessarily dedicated a thing to the Temple. The meaning might simply be, and generally was, that it was to be regarded *like* Corban,—that is, that in regard to the person or persons named, the thing termed so was to be considered as if it were Corban,—laid on the altar, and put entirely out of their reach. For, although included under the same name, there were really two kinds of vows: those of consecration to God, and those of personal obligation—and the latter were the most frequent.

"There can be no doubt that the words of Christ referred to such vows of personal obligation. By these a person might bind himself with regard to men or things, or else put that which was another's out of his own reach, or that which was his own out of the reach of another, and this as completely as if the thing or things had been *Corban*, a gift given to God. . . . And so stringent was the ordinance that (almost in the words of Christ) it is expressly stated that such a vow was binding, even if what was vowed involved a breach of the Law. It cannot be denied that such vows in regard to parents would be binding, and were actually made. Indeed the question is discussed in the Mishnah, in so many words, whether 'honor of father or mother' constituted a ground for invalidating a vow, and decided on the negative against a solitary dissenting voice. And if doubt should still exist, a case is related in the Mishnah, in which a father *was* thus shut out by the vow of his son from anything by which he might be profited by him" (*Edersheim*, vol. ii. pp. 17–21).

Thus was Rabbinism convicted out of its own mouth of the most glaring substitution of its traditions for the word of God, and the moral character of these involved in hopeless condemnation. Nor has traditionalism ever escaped from such a violation of conscience and the word of God. Man being what he is, it could not be otherwise: the maintenance of the word of God in absolute supremacy is his only salvation from the grossest immorality, as the "teaching for the doctrines the commandments of men" is itself rebellion against the Source of all morality.

The Lord calls the multitude together to Him therefore, to give the most public utterance to that which may seem to us so simple, and yet to which a large mass of Christians by profession have not even yet attained; that "not that which entereth into the mouth defileth a man." The source of defilement for a man is, alas, within him; and Christianity by taking away the supposititious sources has lifted the true moral element out of all confusion, and placed it upon an immutable foundation. Brought into the clear light, such a principle commends itself to every man's conscience; but all the more would the Pharisees resent it. The disciples, in some alarm, represent this to Him; but

came the disciples and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended when they heard that word? But he answered and said, Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be [t]rooted up. Let them alone: they are [u]blind leaders of the blind; but if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

t *cf.* ch. 5.20. *cf.* Acts 15. 10.
u Is. 9. 16. Mal. 2. 8. ch. 23. 16. Lk. 6. 39.

And Peter answered and said unto him, Explain to us this parable. And he said, Are ye also even yet without understanding? Do ye not perceive that whatever entereth into the mouth passeth into the belly and is cast out into the draught? but the things that come out of the mouth proceed from the [v]heart, and *they* defile the man: for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnessings, blasphemies. These are the things that defile the man; but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not the man.

v *cf.* Jas. 3. 10-12. Gen. 6. 5.

2 (xv. 21-28): Faith confirmed.

2. And Jesus going forth from thence, withdrew into the parts of [w]Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanitish woman coming out of those coasts cried out, saying,

w Mk. 7.24-30.

He at once in most decisive language condemns their principles as what were no plants of His Father's planting, but as it were weeds that must be rooted up; while they themselves were but blind leaders of blind followers: they would fall into the ditch together. For man cannot escape from the responsibility which the moral faculty entails on him, and which would for the simplest, if they would listen to it, break such snares as these.

Yet, so great is the blinding force of association and habits of thought, that even the disciples, as represented by the ever foremost Peter, desire to have "this parable" explained to them; and He has to reprove them for their spiritual slowness. How constantly was there found in this the cause of this lack of understanding which we would rather even impute to mere mental feebleness. Cannot they perceive the difference between the moral and the material? Here is indeed a fountain of evil which it may pass human ability to cleanse, but it has to be reckoned with. It is an easy thing to legislate about meats and the washing of hands, and by such poor righteousness as this satisfy oneself perhaps but too well; but even this satisfaction convicts the soul of its unrighteousness and lack of truthful dealing with itself. The evil must be faced in order to deliverance; but where shall deliverance be found?

2. The answer we have in the next incident, the story of the Canaanitish woman. From the pitiable self-righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, which is but hypocrisy, the Lord withdraws into the parts of Tyre and Sidon. Here are open sinners, long since under the divine curse for their sins; but here too, as everywhere, are the needs which under God force men to reality. Thus they are mercies in disguise,—a divine Voice, which must have mercy in it, even though this may not be recognized as such.

A woman out of these coasts comes crying after Him. With her it is need that brings her, that blessed need that in one shape or another has brought us all. But she appeals to Him by a strange title for a Canaanite—"the Son of David," and as such she could have no claim upon Him. He answers her, therefore, not a word. With a heart full of blessing for her, He yet could not bless her on false ground: for her it would not be good; for Him it would be impossible. But to come to Christ without a claim seems also at first impossible, not knowing aright either ourselves or Him. We try to claim Him by some betterness beyond our neighbors, or by our repentance and good resolu-

Have pity on me, O Lord, thou [x]Son of David! my daughter is grievously vexed with a demon. But he answered her not a word. And his [y]disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away: for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent save to the [z]lost sheep of the house of Israel. But she came and worshiped him, saying, Lord, [a]help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's loaf, and to cast it to the [b]dogs. But she said, Yea, Lord: for the dogs also eat of the [c]crumbs that fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee [d]as thou wilt. And her daughter was healed from that hour.

x ch. 1. 1. ch. 22. 41, 42. *cf.* Ps. 132. 11.
y *cf.* Lk. 18. 15. *cf.* Lk. 9. 54, 55.
z ch. 10. 5, 6. *cf.* Jno. 1. 11.
a Ps. 145. 18.
b *cf.* ch. 7. 6. *cf.* Jno. 4. 22.
c *cf.* Ex. 22. 21. *cf.* Lev. 23. 22. *cf.* Ruth 2. 12. *cf.* Is. 56. 6, 7. *cf.* Acts 10. 9–18, 28.
d *cf.* ch. 9. 27–29; *cf.* ch. 21. 21, 22.

tions, or in some other way by which we may avoid the full facing of our need —of that which has given the devil power against us. But the Canaanite under the curse is still our picture if we put it that way, and Christ is the Son of David, silent and afar off. He had, in fact, to take a far different position, in order that either Jews or Gentiles might have part in Him.

Yet she cries on, till the disciples also beg Him to dismiss her; impliedly (for they knew His grace) by granting her request. But he answers, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." He speaks, let us notice, not of what is in His heart, but in His mission; and He speaks as Son of David, not as Son of man or Saviour. But even the house of Israel were *lost* sheep, little as they realized it; and if *they* were "lost," what hope for any, save in pure and utter grace?

She takes heart, as it seems, by this, to draw near to Him: for if Israel be lost, and He has come after them, may not a lost one from outside have hope also? and will not grace be consistent with itself? can it be local merely, and limited—not universal? how could such light shine, and not shine all round? Has he not here, in fact, supplied her with the argument which presently she uses? Did He not mean to do so, when He dropped that word, so penetrating, so assuring, into her heart?

So she comes, now worshiping, and dropping the formal title; while she owns in her simple "Lord," in a more personal way, His title over her. Will He not give *help* to one who needs it? So she drops all other claim than this: "Lord," she says, "help me." "But He answered and said, It is not right to take the children's loaf and cast it to the dogs."

That might seem as if she had gained nothing, but she has. Again He has dropped a word for her, if she be lowly enough to take it. For the last word "dogs" is not the word for the wild houseless, offal-hunting creatures of the eastern streets, but though still "dogs," yet the "little dogs," the house or pet-dogs even, such as would look, as she was doing, for *something in the house.* So that the way for her into blessing has really been laid open: *if* only she has humility enough to take it. And indeed faith and humility—which in a sinner is repentance—are twin companions, never to be disjoined. He that is lowly enough to take the place of dog will soon discern God's way of grace. She sees at once the steps by which He has been leading her—"the lost," the "dog," yet the house-dog, dependent and to be cared for in some way. And then *His* bounteous table! perhaps she may have heard of those baskets of fragments taken up after five thousand men had been fed at it: at any rate, she did not ask,—had no need to ask the children's loaf: the fragments—in her humility and faith, she says, "the crumbs"—would be enough for her: "Truth, Lord; for the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their masters' table."

No fear of that argument failing: He himself has given it her; and He would

3 (xv. 29-38): Divine fullness.

3. And Jesus departed thence and came nigh to the sea of Galilee. And he went up into the mountain and sat down there. And there came unto him great multitudes, having with them, the [e]lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and they cast them at his feet, and he healed them: so that the multitude wondered, seeing the dumb speaking, the maimed whole, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they [f]glorified the God of Israel. And Jesus, having called his disciples unto him, said, I have [g]compassion on the multitude, because they have been with me now three days, and have nothing to eat; and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint by the way. And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so many loaves in the wilderness as to fill so great a multitude? And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, [h]Seven, and a few little fishes. And he commanded the multitudes to recline on the ground; and he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks and brake and gave them unto the disciples, and the disciples to the multitudes. And they all ate and were filled; and they took up what was over of the fragments seven baskets full. And they that had eaten were [i]four thousand men, beside women and children.

[e] ch. 11. 5. Ps. 146. 8. *cf.* Is. 35. 5, 6.

[f] Lk. 5. 25, 26. *cf.* Lk. 19. 37, 38. *ctr.* ch. 11. 20-24.

[g] Mk. 8. 1-9. *cf.* ch. 9. 36-38.

[h] *cf.* ch. 14. 17. ver. 37.

[i] *cf.* ch. 14. 21.

deny His very nature did He say, He was not good enough for *that*. But He has no thought of this, no need of the argument, which yet, for her sake, He rejoices in: His heart leaps to His lips, as He exclaims, "O woman, great is thy faith! be it unto thee even as thou wilt." And her daughter is healed from that very hour.

Here is how a human heart is led into the sanctuary; and the holy, pure, revealing light is that of *grace*. What work has been done in it is plain enough, and what no cleansing of the hands could ever have effected. Here is the divine remedy for the heart's vileness, *the revelation of the heart of God to it*. But Pharisaism could not even understand it, and the double miracle, wrought for a Canaanite, would only have been a double offence. It is not even presented to them, therefore, but has to be done afar off, though under the eyes of His disciples, a sweet appealing picture for those that have hearts to understand it. To how many hearts has it not appealed since then!

3. So now the table of the Lord is spread, and divine fullness is poured out for man's need. The dispensational character so largely found in Matthew still characterizes what is here, and after the blessing of the Gentile in the Canaanitish woman, the Lord is here again among the Jews, and the multitudes who are witnesses and recipients of abundant goodness, glorify the *God of Israel*. This is all in perfect order; and the feeding of the people has in the numbers connected with it a witness that must not be despised. There are *seven* loaves now, and *seven* baskets* full of fragments, the number of perfection being thus doubly stamped on the divine bounty, and carrying us on in thought to the final blessing.

4. A new demand is now made upon Christ for a sign from heaven, the Pharisees uniting with their constant enemies, the Sadducees, to make it. The com-

*Larger baskets than in the former miracle: here σπυρίδες, "round, plaited-baskets; fish- or provision-baskets;" in the former case, κόφινοι, "hand- or traveling-baskets. The distinction is always preserved, as in the next chapter.

4 (xv. 39-xvi. 4): Israel's failure to discern the time.

4. And when he had dismissed the multitudes, he went up into the ship, and came unto the coasts of Magdala.* And the Pharisees and Sadducees came and, tempting [him], desired him to show them a [j]sign from heaven. But he answered and said unto them, When [k]even is come, ye say, Fine weather, for the sky is red; and in the morning, A storm to-day, for the sky is red and lowering: ye know how to discern the face of the sky, but the signs of the times ye cannot. A [l]wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and no sign shall be given to it, but the sign of Jonas. And he left them and departed.

[j] ch. 12.38-41. Mk. 8. 10-13.
[k] Lk. 12.54-57.
[l] *cf.* ch.21.23-27.

5 (xvi.5-12): warning as to the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

5. And when his disciples had come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. And Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the [m]leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, [It is] because we have no bread. And Jesus knowing [this], said, Why reason ye among yourselves, O ye of little faith, because ye have taken no

[m] Mk. 8.14-21. Lk. 12. 1. *cf.* Gal. 5.9.

*Or "Magadan."

ing together of those otherwise so opposed was but a sign of the strength of that opposition to Jesus which united them. There was not even truth in the desire they expressed; and the character of it showed the reason why they could not see in Him the reality of His claim. A sign that could work upon a carnal people was what they sought, and which would have left them a carnal people still. The faith so awakened would have had none of the moral qualities of faith in it: conscience and heart would have been alike wanting, and God so displayed would have been half dethroned. What a slight, too, would be put upon the Sign of signs, Himself, the Son of God, come in power, yet in all the grace of humanity, among men His creatures! From Him, indeed, the supernatural was natural; but on that account it could not accredit Him: He was above it, though it bore witness to Him. To those who believed on His Name when they saw His miracles, He could not commit Himself (John ii. 23–25).

In fact, they were prophets of the external and could read well enough the face of the sky: the spiritual condition, which always rules in the signs of the times just because God is a moral Governor, this they could not see. Had they done so, they would have judged first their own condition and have been brought by their need to the supply provided.

But "a wicked and adulterous generation" it was that sought after a sign, and they would get none but the sign of Jonas. His death and resurrection would be a sign against them, that they had rejected the message of God and His grace, such as Nineveh had known nothing about. Already He had declared this as now inevitable, and briefly refers to it here, as to a sentence pronounced. Then He leaves them and departs.

5. But these Pharisees and Sadducees do not present an evil wholly outside of the circle of His disciples. We have all of us, alas, within us that which makes us from the side of nature but too much akin to them, and in our hearts that which offers itself as a ready and kindly soil for their most seemingly opposite errors. The Lord therefore, in that enigmatic way which He so much used, and which is so well adapted to awaken thought and searching of heart, bids His disciples "beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." They can think only that it is because they have taken no bread; although it would be enigmatic enough how the ritualism or rationalism of these could affect their breadmaking. But this manifested again the terrible unbelief of those who

bread? Do ye not [n]yet understand nor remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many hand-baskets ye took up, nor the seven loaves of the four thousand and how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not understand that I spake not to you of loaves, to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees? Then they understood that he spake not to them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the [o]doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

[n] *cf.* Jno. 12. 37. *cf.* Lk. 24. 25. *cf.* Heb. 5. 11, 12.

[o] *cf.* Gal. 1. 6-9. *cf.* Col. 2. 4, 18.

[1] (xvi. 13-19): Christ's purpose as to His assembly, and the administration of the Kingdom.

SUBDIVISION 4. (Chaps. xvi. 13–xvii. 21.)

"The Kingdom and patience" in man's world and day.

[1] AND when Jesus came into the parts of [p]Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am? And they said,

[p] Mk. 8. 27-33. Lk. 9. 18-22.

had twice so lately seen Him multiply the loaves so as to satisfy thousands. Yet they could think that *He* was troubled about the supply of bread! Nay, it was of the doctrine of the Jewish leaders He was speaking, and of its subtle pervasive working; by which indeed Christendom has been so largely corrupted since. We have already seen His own use of the figure in this way, and it might have prepared them to understand of what He was now speaking. They were slow to understand; but how slowly indeed does that which is of God dawn upon us in general!

SUBD. 4.

We come now to what furnishes the ground of Peter's two epistles,—what John speaks of as "the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" (Rev. i. 9); set up in a world of which Satan is still the prince, through the lusts by which he holds men captive. Thus the world is that which knew not Christ when He came into it, and of which the cross is the characteristic sign. The cross for the Master means, therefore, the cross for the disciple, as He declares here, if indeed we will be true to Him. The light for the path is a glory outside the world, and which is in His face whom the world has rejected and cast out. Thus we are "called," as Peter says, (2 Peter i. 3) "by glory and virtue"—the last being the *soldier's* virtue, "courage," the virtue of the Church militant; and as in Colossians (i. 11), "strengthened with all might, according to the power of His glory, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness."

We have in connection with this the first plain announcement of Christ's assembly, not as Paul long afterwards was given to declare it, as Christ's "body" or "bride," but rather as the house of God, "a spiritual house" of "living stones," as Peter preaches from this very text (1 Pet. ii. 5). Moreover the administration of the Kingdom is committed to Peter, as representative of the assembly, no doubt (comp. chap. xviii. 17, 18). We have already seen its history (chap. xiii), and that the opposition of the world which is the necessary consequence of moral oppositeness, comes to be introduced within the Christian profession itself, so as to entail the need of overcoming in this way also: of which the epistles give us everywhere abundant proof, if indeed the experience of any true disciple permitted him to doubt it.

[1] It is in the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi—stamped thus doubly with the assertion of the power of the world rulers, the Cæsars and the Herods, there where Israel should have been sole possessor of the land, upholding and upheld by the name of her God,—that this revelation of the Divine purpose in the assembly is made. Israel is but as a wanderer among the nations now. Her doom is upon her, although not as yet fully carried into effect; and the world which is uniting with her in the rejection of the one hope of deliverance must still be left for Cæsar and Herod to divide between them. Out of it God is going to

Some, John the Baptist; but others, Elias; and others again, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But [q]ye, who do ye say that I am? And Simon

[q] Jno. 6. 67.

separate a people for Himself, and in the over abounding of divine grace to give them an inheritance in heaven. But this they are to reach by His own pathway of suffering in the world, the fellowship of His sufferings being the fit training for fellowship upon the throne and in the glory.

The first point here is in the apprehension of Himself; and so He asks His disciples now. "Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" He uses the term by which we find Him, in the synoptic Gospels, most commonly speaking of Himself, the term so perfect in its lowliness, so tender in its intimacy, so unique in its very generality: for, just because *all* were "sons of men," the claim to be the Son of man would by itself be suited to awaken attention. If Daniel, and, still more, Ezekiel were addressed by the Lord as "son of man," this of course was a thing quite different. Whatever else it signified, the reminder of essential difference between the glorious Speaker and the frail instrument by whom He pleased to speak to men, was obviously in place. But, just on that very account, no prophet of them all, in speaking to other men, could have called himself the "Son of man." On the other hand, Daniel had spoken of "One like unto a son of man" coming in the clouds of heaven to receive universal dominion (chap. vii. 13, 14), a passage to us abundantly clear, but which does not in fact give Messiah this title, as is plain, and by the Jews in general it does not seem to have been even applied to him.* The question put by them afterwards would apparently indicate this: "We have heard out of the Law, that Christ abideth for ever; and *Thou* sayest, the Son of man shall be lifted up: *who is* this Son of man? (John xii. 34). As a title indeed, to those whose expectations of the Messiah were so different, its lowliness would not commend it to such use as the Lord constantly made of it. The form of it in Daniel (*Bar Enahsh*) is the very lowliest, "a son of frail, or mortal, man," so that we are naturally reminded of the "*likeness* of sinful flesh" (it *could* only be "likeness" here of which the apostle speaks, Rom. viii. 3). Little fit would they be to understand the tenderness of the adoption of such an epithet as "Son of man."†

What did they make of One who came after this manner: not emblazoning His name upon the skies, but writing it upon the hearts of those relieved by divine mercy through Him? of One who, instead of skimming over the surface of the sore of humanity, probed it to the bottom, though but to heal it effectually? "Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?"

The answer only takes the judgment of friends into account, and this is various: "some say, John the Baptist; some Elias; some, Jeremias, or one of the prophets." But this various judgment is, in fact, but one: *no one really knows;* among the crowds around, and recognizing too, the best that could be said for them, the desire to do Him honor, there is yet, so to speak, *no true faith.* No matter as to the difference between these thoughts, compared with their amazing unanimity. Well might He say, "I have labored in vain; I have spent my strength for nought and in vain." Israel is surely not now to be gathered, though there is still an election of grace. He turns to the disciples with the same question: "But ye, who do *ye* say that I am?" And Peter breaks out with his answer for the rest: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

* Edersheim in his "Life and Times of Jesus," so often referred to, in a list of Old Testament passages so applied, says of this one only: "Dan. vii. 13 is curiously explained in the Talmud (Sanh. 98 *a*) where it is said that, if Israel behaved worthily, the Messiah would come in the clouds of heaven; if otherwise, humble, and riding upon an ass." In the "Book of Enoch" also, the Messiah appears in the clouds of heaven "as a son of man," amid the angels of the divine judgment-seat; and in the Sibylline Oracles there are allusions.

† *Not*, however, the equivalent of *Bar Enahsh*, but of *Ben Adam*, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, "of *man*" generically.

Peter answering said, Thou art the [r]Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answering said unto him, [s]Blessed art thou, Simon bar-Jona: for flesh and blood

[r] ch. 14. 33. John 6. 69. John 11. 27. Acts 9. 20.
[s] 1 Jno. 4. 15. 1 Jno. 5. 1, 5; *cf.* Jno. 1. 12, 13 with ch. 11. 27.

Here, then, while Israel remains in unbelief, is the faith of the Church. It is founded on Scripture, but along with this on the knowledge of Christ Himself,—on the revelation of Christ by the Father to him, as the Lord immediately declares. The Spirit and the Word act together, and so constantly: the Shepherd comes in by the door, and the porter opens to Him; He speaks, and the sheep hear His voice.

That the Christ would be the Son of God, Scripture had again and again declared. The second psalm expressly represents Him as rejected by men, yet owned of God as His Son by nature, yet in manhood, and to be (in spite of all opposition) King at last on Zion. And this is the Scripture which with one accord the disciples quote, after the first appearance of the apostles before the rulers of the Jews, when dismissed, they go to their own company (Acts iv. 25-28).

Similarly, according to Isaiah, the virgin's Son would be Immanuel, and this no mere or hyperbolical name: the Child born, the Son given, upon whose shoulder was to be the government in Israel, would be "the mighty God, the Father of eternity, the Prince of peace" (Isaiah vii. 14; ix. 6).

His deity, though born in Bethlehem, but whose goings forth had been of old, from everlasting, Micah had borne witness to, in those words which the scribes and chief priests, so unavailingly for either, could quote to Herod.

Other scriptures there were to shame Israel's unbelief in God's marvelous grace to her, and her great glory. But Peter, taught of God, expresses his faith in a way that shows it to be personal, not traditional nor mere orthodoxy, but a divine energy within his soul. It is the Eternal Life that He has seen in Christ—that indeed was in Him "the Light of men" (John i. 4). Thus he calls Him not simply the Son of God, but "the Son of the *living* God." Living power it is that he has realized in Him, the manifested Life, the incarnate, creative Word, and in the sense of this he bears witness to Him.

Striking it is, too, that John, His most intimate disciple, speaks of Life so much. And with Peter, if we look at his first epistle, we shall find that "living" is a characteristic word. A "living hope," "the living word," "living stones" built up upon the "Living Stone," living unto righteousness, living according to God: all these harmonize with his confession of Christ here; while some of them carry us right back to the confession itself or to the Lord's words in response to it. They combine to assure us of the Presence in which he had lived and walked, and of its power over him.

The Lord answers immediately: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, who is heaven. And I say unto thee, that thou art Peter (Petros), and upon this rock (petra) I will build my assembly; and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it."

Peter's faith is thus a divinely given faith, the fruit of a divine revelation to his soul, and thus he is a true "bar-jona," (son of a dove,) born of the Spirit of God; and, Israel having rejected Christ, he must have a new place provided for him, and for those of like faith. Thus he becomes Peter, a stone in a new spiritual building which will be Christ's assembly. It is not yet said that this is the house of God, which in Israel, as we know, had been always a material building. Relationship to God is not yet opened up, but rather to Himself as the Builder of it. It is to be His assembly, a people "called out," as the word indicates,* to Himself; and Peter himself explains it to us as consisting of "living stones," who "coming to" Him, the "Living Stone," "are built up a

* Ecclesia (ἐκκλησία) from ἐκκαλέω, to "call out."

> hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father, who is in heaven. And *I* also say unto thee, that thou art

spiritual house" (in opposition to Israel's material one). He thus very simply settles the old controversy which Rome has raised upon the Lord's words to him, —none more competent to settle it surely than the one to whom the words were spoken, and, moreover, Rome's own chosen interpreter, whom for very shame they cannot refuse, and by refusing whom they still destroy their own interpretation: so has God doubly guarded the truth against their perversion. Peter assures us that the "Rock" upon which the assembly is founded is not Peter but Christ Himself. The Petra is not the Petros, near as these may be together: for indeed the "stone" derives all its rock-like qualities from the "rock,"—is, so to speak, quarried out of the rock upon which it is founded.

There is no question here, then, to raise or to settle: the "prophetic scriptures" have settled it for us in anticipation, before it was raised. The assembly called out to Christ, is built upon Christ, and every way His assembly: relationship to Himself is now the whole question. And He being the Son of the *living* God, the gates of hades—of death—cannot prevail against it. Death has prevailed over the whole human race, but in the Son of God become Son of man, a new and eternal life has come into humanity, annulling, for those who believe in Him, him who had the power of death, that is, the devil. For these death is abolished, and life and incorruption are brought to light through the gospel.

Here, then, the assembly stands, upon the rock of resurrection, though resurrection has not yet been mentioned in connection with it. But Christ, says the apostle, is marked out Son of God by resurrection of the dead (Rom. i. 4). Life is thus not in Him simply, but in Him meets the power of death and vanquishes it: the assembly (though in the meanwhile on earth) belongs to the other side of death, yea, to heaven: the gates of hades open in vain for it.

This is not, therefore, as Rome again alleges, an affirmation of the infallibility of the Church, but rather of its continuance; and it does continue until at the coming of Christ it is removed to heaven. Of the saints of the Old Testament the apostle could speak as "the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. xii. 23); and if by the latter expression he intimates, as he surely does, their resurrection, that still shows that, as a body, they had been removed by death. But the Church of Christ could never be spoken of in such a manner: spite of all that it has come through—all the opposition of men and Satan through which it has come,—the yawning jaws of the grave have never ingulfed it. Though in its character an exotic, and not of earth, the power of the Spirit has maintained it here without interruption, a witness even in her failure and suffering to her absent Lord.

But under all this, and shining through it, there is a higher truth, as has been already said: the Church is that in which, first of all, the power of life over death, death itself made to minister to it and sustain it, comes out in its full character. The eternal life has come in Christ in its perfection, but in Him as a corn of wheat which, falling into the ground and dying, brings forth fruit in which it is perpetuated and multiplied. This is, of course, John's doctrine, or that of his Gospel rather, and Paul also must come in to give it full utterance; but it is wrapped up here in the Lord's first announcement of the Church to Peter.

He is going to build it. His words are as yet but prophecy, not a declaration of what He has done, or is doing, but of what He is going to do. Between that and the present lies for Him, as He begins now to declare explicitly, that awful valley of the shadow of death through which a deeper death darkens,—an uttermost woe which He alone can bear, a depth in which no foot but His could find standing. Then the "light of life" will have come, the weight be removed from off man's heart, the cloud from his path, but more,—the veil rent which covers the sanctuary, he will draw near to God, distance done away for ever, to where the full glory of God in a *Human Face* shall greet and bless and glorify

Peter, and on [t]this rock I will build my [u]assembly; and the gates of [v]hades shall not prevail against it.

[t] *cf.* ch. 7. 24, 25. *cf.* Is. 28. 16 with 1 Cor. 3. 11; Ps. 18. 2. [u] *cf.* Eph. 2. 20; *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 4, 5. [v] *cf.* Rev. 1. 18; *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 50-58.

him with its radiance. This is what Christianity means for us even here; and oh that one could tell it out, but it is impossible. Christ must be for Himself the Speaker, and every one must hear from His own lips, find in His own face, drink in from His own love, that else ineffable reality.

From the announcement of the assembly (or, as it is commonly called the Church *) and of Peter's place in it, the Lord goes on to speak of the Kingdom and his place in it: two things which are surely connected together, while they are different, and of which it is important to see both the connection and the difference. Here also there has been on both sides as much confusion of thought as in the former case, and far more widely spread. We shall do well therefore to examine with the more care the meaning of what is here before us.

A common confusion is that of the Church and the Kingdom, and which has both proceeded from and led on to very serious confusion in other respects. We have already seen sufficiently what the Kingdom is, to be delivered from the possibility of any absolute identification of them. It certainly was not the Church which John the Baptist proclaimed to be "at hand." Israel was alone before him as the people of God, though needing to be purged by the Lord for entrance into His Kingdom. Even so, people and Kingdom were plainly different thoughts, however closely they might be connected together.

The Kingdom in its Old Testament character being for the time set aside, on account of Israel's rejection of the King, the "assembly" which Christ owns as His, in the day of that rejection, becomes the recognized people of God; and in the same relation to the "Kingdom and patience" that Israel will yet have in relation to His "Kingdom and glory." Still the Kingdom and the people are very different thoughts; although in any picture of the Kingdom we necessarily see the people. So it has been in that history of the Kingdom which we have had put before us in the parables of the thirteenth chapter. But there even, if we have been able to interpret them aright, the people before us in the first parables are not the same people as in the closing one at all; and the Kingdom, while changing in character at the close, goes on beyond the time of the "assembly," of which we have been speaking, altogether.

Church and Kingdom are not, then, even for the present time, the same; though it may be urged that (in the same way as with Israel) in some sense we may identify them. Yet even here, for any right interpretation of the passage before us, we must learn to discriminate. We shall surely find, if we look closely enough, that we cannot even say that (even for the present time) the limits of Church and Kingdom are practically the same: there is a difference here also which must be taken into account, although we may not be able, at the point which we have reached in the Gospel here, fully to define it.

The Kingdom, it is plain, in its mystery-form, is established in the world, not by any open act of divine power, but by the sowing of the "word of the Kingdom" in the hearts of men. It is thus not territorial, as the kingdoms of the world are, but a Kingdom of the truth, a sphere of discipleship; which may be, however, merely outward and nominal, a profession true or false, which the end will declare. This is plain by the parables that have been before us. Its blessings are thus conditional, dependent upon character and conduct, as the parable of the unforgiving servant especially declares (chap. xviii).

That it is administered by men, as representatives of the absent King, the

* While in common parlance we may still use this term, it is important in all interpretation of Scripture to keep to the true word, "assembly," which, if it had been always adhered to, would have done much of itself to prevent some of the perversion of thought which has connected itself with the other. Church, as is perfectly well known, comes from the Greek *Kuriake*, "of the Lord," which (as is evident) leaves out the very thing which *ecclesia* defines, and so permits the free substitution of other thoughts in its place.

And I will give unto thee the [w]keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou mayest [x]bind on earth shall

[w] *cf.* Acts 2. 14, 42. *cf.* Acts 10. 46-48.
[x] ch. 18. 18; Jno. 20. 22, 23; *cf.* Acts 5. 1-11.

Lord's words to Peter here are clearly in proof, for the keys of the Kingdom are committed to him: not, I believe, distinctively, but as connected with that place which the Lord had just assigned him. As his confession of Him was just that of the others—of all true disciples, so the place of a stone in Christ's spiritual building was not Peter's alone, but that of all disciples; and the keys of the Kingdom go with this: the Church (that is) administers the Kingdom. In the eighteenth chapter, the power of binding and loosing, given here to Peter, is given to the assembly as a whole (ver. 18): and when we consider what the power of the keys implies, we shall find that in fact it is not peculiar to Peter at all. The two statements here go perfectly together, and as Peter is but a living stone founded upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, so every living stone is thus a Peter, and addressed as such through him.

After all that Rome and ritualism and even more evangelical systems have found in these keys, it may be hard to credit such a view as this; and with many it has been customary to point to Peter's eminent place on the day of Pentecost in opening the Kingdom to the Jews, as afterwards in the person of Cornelius to the Gentiles. But an eminent place may be fully allowed him in this way, while yet we deny him any exclusive place; and in fact we cannot exclude others on the day of Pentecost; nor even at Cæsarea allow that this was the sole use of the key in relation to the Gentiles, any more than the use of *another* key than that which before had opened the Kingdom to the Jews. One act did not surely exhaust the service of the key, nor to open the door *twice* require *two* keys. Can it be thought that the door once opened simply *remained* open, and needed no more opening? On the contrary, I believe it can be conclusively shown that the administration of the Kingdom, which these keys stand for, is not yet over, is not all come to an end in one initial authoritative act. Men still receive and are received in; and if the power of the keys speaks of admission into the Kingdom, and the Kingdom be the sphere of discipleship, then the key is in fact but authority to disciple.

Now there are keys, not simply a key; and so, if we are right, a double way of doing this is implied. The first is what the Lord Himself speaks of as "the key of *knowledge*," and which He reproaches the lawyers for taking from the people (Luke xi. 52). Similarly in this Gospel He denounces the Pharisees for shutting up the Kingdom of heaven against men. "Ye neither go in yourselves," He tells them, "neither suffer ye those that are entering to go in" (Matt. xxiii. 13).

But while the key of knowledge is thus the first and fundamental form of what is here, it is not the whole. There is also an authoritative reception, which the Lord has enjoined, and which, just *as* submission to authority, is most suited in entering the Kingdom. Baptism is thus "unto Christ" (Rom. vi. 3), and "unto the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts viii. 16), an open "putting on of Christ" (Gal. iii. 27). It is thus a bowing to the authority of the King, as entering the Kingdom: "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, *calling upon the name of the Lord*," says Ananias to Saul (Acts xxii. 16). But the Lord Himself most distinctly puts the two keys together when, after His resurrection, with all authority given to Him in heaven and earth, He sends out the eleven with the commission of the King, saying: "Go and disciple all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the completion of the age (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20).

All this is in perfect harmony with the words to Peter here, and sufficiently explains them. Thus read, they are in the highest degree appropriate to the occasion upon which they were spoken, as introducing to the new state of things

be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou mayest [y] loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

[y] cf. 2 Cor. 2. 6-8.

which was at hand. Their very character as outlining, rather than filling in, leaving much to be explained at an aftertime, is perfectly suited to their introductory position. This is not, however, all that the Lord announces here; He adds, "And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven:" words which have been perhaps as much in contention as to their meaning as any of those connected with them here.

There need be no doubt that the terms "binding" and "loosing" have reference to, and are indeed but the application, in a Christian manner, of those in use among the Rabbins, and the Lord's extension of them to the assembly in the eighteenth chapter shows absolutely that such power as is implied in them was not simply to belong to Simon Peter. Two or three gathered to Christ's name have exactly the same authority, the same sanction of their acts; in either case the Lord uses the very same words: "Whatsoever *thou* shalt bind on earth," or "loose," "whatsoever *ye* shall bind," or "loose, on earth shall be bound (or loosed) in heaven." If this were the communication of even apostolic power to Peter, then every two or three gathered to Christ's name have similar apostolic power. No one doubts, of course, that Peter had this; no one, I suppose, would claim it for the two or three. That is not in contention: the question is solely now of what these words convey. The same words must have the same meaning, if there is to be any certain meaning in words at all: the application, or limitation, must be found in the connection. Not even the Romanist would say that there was to be absolutely *no* limitation, even in Peter's case; and if any did, he would have (if he would be consistent) to say exactly the same of every little gathering to the name of Jesus. No one certainly could press a conclusion in the one case that would not have exactly the same title to be pressed in the other.

Now, if we seek the limitation in the context, that in the case of the two or three is easily seen to be to cases of discipline needed to maintain the Lord's honor in their midst. The assembly does not define doctrine, and has no right to "teach for doctrine the commandments of men." Christ alone is the authoritative Teacher, by His Spirit, and all we are brethren (chap. xxiii. 8). But the assembly has to maintain by a holy discipline what is due to Him who is Head and Lord, and whatsoever is truly bound in this way is bound in heaven. Here moral conditions also, in the very nature of things, impose a limitation: for to "bind" a saint to do evil cannot be authorized in heaven, and it would be wickedness to maintain this.

When we take this back with us to Simon Peter's case, we shall find similar limitations. The context does not speak of the discipline of an assembly, but of administration in the Kingdom of heaven. This is not the Church, but the sphere of individual responsibility to the Lord, and hence the individuality of the assurance, "thou" not "ye." The connection here is with the keys of the Kingdom,—with discipling into it: here individual teachers teach, and disciples baptize. There is no limit to any class that Scripture gives us, except the limit of *capacity*, and no control over others recognized except as all are subject to the common discipline of which we have been speaking.

Peter, therefore, in what the Lord says to him here, is not the apostle, but the confessor of his Lord. In his faith he does not stand alone, but is the representative of others. As Peter, the living "stone," he does not stand alone either. In his use of the "keys" he is not alone; and in teaching and baptizing, the sanction of heaven is put upon what is done on earth; but nowhere apart from such necessarily implied conditions as we all own must come in in the case of two or three gathered to the Lord's name.

There is really no special difficulty in all this. The difficulties have been created for us by ecclesiastical views and claims which have grown up, as the

2 (xvi. 20-28): The cross the badge of the followers of the Crucified.

2 Then [z]charged he his disciples, that they should say to no man that *he* was the Christ. From that time Jesus began to show to his disciples that he must go away to Jerusalem, and [a]suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised again. And Peter taking him began to [b]rebuke him, saying, [God] be propitious to thee, Lord: this shall never be to thee. But he, turning round, said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou art an [c]offence to me: for thou hast not a mind toward the things of God, but toward the things of men. Then Jesus said unto his disciples, If any one

z ch. 17. 9. *ctr.* 2 Cor. 3. 12.

a ch. 17. 12.

b *ctr.* ver. 16. *cf.* Jno. 13. 36-38.

c *cf.* Gal. 1. 8. *cf.* Jno. 18. 10, 11.

Church, in the decline of spiritual power, came to lean upon external supports and to adopt a legal system as a refuge from license—the boat, as easier than walking on the water. Alas, it must be confessed it is; but oh, that Peter might here be suffered to speak to us of what *he* found in his walk upon that boisterous sea to meet His Lord, and of that Hand stretched out to meet him when the storm was beyond his strength, with the words which rebuked, not his rashness in walking *there*, but the little faith that had made it to appear but rashness.

2 All this already tells of rejection of the King. Now He declares it to them in plain words such as He had not uttered yet. Those who have just expressed their faith in Him as the Christ are now told that they are not to utter this to any man. There is no hope as to the nation, and He shows them that He must "go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up." It is not atonement of which He speaks, but of rejection by men, the human side of His death, and not the divine. But this brings out in him who had been the spokesman of the apostles the working of that which was not faith but the opposite of it, and in which the Lord discerned the attack of the enemy. "Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him, saying, God be propitious to Thee, Lord: this shall *never* be to Thee!" But He, turning round, said unto Peter, "Get thee behind Me, Satan; for thou art an offence unto Me; for thou hast not a mind toward the things of God, but toward the things of men."

Thus quickly are the thoughts rebuked of those who would put Peter upon a throne of infallibility above all others. He is now sunk down into a mere ordinary man, with nothing but the thoughts of men, nay, an instrument of Satan to tempt the Lord Himself. Satan too would willingly have spared Him that Cross that He foresaw: for all the counsels of God hung upon it. From one side it was, indeed, but the awful wickedness of man; but from another the display of the glory of God, at once in righteousness and in love towards men. Peter knew not yet his own need, nor yet the unique place and dignity of his Master. He is praying God to be propitious to Him who is to be Himself the one propitiation for others; and to spare Him that by which propitiation could alone be wrought. Thus human wisdom may mistake its way, and human affection set itself against the path of divine love. And thus may the same man who has just now been drinking in, in faith, the revelation of God, without any consciousness of the transition, presently with equal zeal and earnestness be listening to the adversary! How we need constantly to pray, "Search me, O God, and try me!"

But the Lord not only declares His own path; He announces it as the path also of all His followers. What was peculiar to Himself in it, the cup that none but Himself could drink, He does not speak of, and here there is indeed an infinite difference; but as far as man's part in it is concerned, He warns us all, "If any one will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall

will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his [d]cross and follow me. For whosoever will save his life* shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life* for my sake, shall find it. For [e]what shall a man be profited, if he gain the whole world, but suffer the loss of his soul*? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul*? For the Son of man is about to come in the [f]glory of his Father with his angels, and then shall he render to every one according to his doings. Verily I

[d] Mk. 8. 34-38. Lk. 9. 23-26. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 10, 11.
[e] Mk. 8. 36, 37. *cf.* Lk. 12. 20, 21. *cf.* Jas. 5. 1-6.
[f] ch. 25. 31. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 10, 11. *cf.* Jude 14, 15. *cf.* Rev. 19. 11-21.

* ψυχη, soul or life.

lose his life for My sake shall find it." Thus the conditions of discipleship are laid down with the most decisive plainness, for all without exception. It is a world which has crucified Christ through which our path lies, and we have to make up our mind to face it. It is evident that He does not hold out any hope of the world changing, nor therefore of the path changing. The style of its opposition perhaps may change—even in His case it varied; but the opposition itself, proceeding from its unbelief in Him, could not possibly change, except by that unbelief being given up: and that would mean, of course, the world ceasing to exist, in all that which, according to Scripture, constitutes it the "world."

Its moral characteristics the apostle John describes for us, where he says that "all that is of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John ii. 16). When men are no more characterised by these things, then the world (as such) will have ceased to exist. We know that this has not taken place, however, and Scripture never contemplates such a state before the Lord comes, at least. The path still exists for us, therefore: and the conditions of the path exist.

The Lord calls upon His people, therefore, to take their life in their hand, if necessary in order to follow Him. We must not "will" to keep it, if we "will" to follow Him. That is to be the spirit of our discipleship, and with the implication, of course, that we shall be tested as to it. We know how fully the generations immediately following the days of the Lord on earth were tested—how often the cross and the sword and the flame made His people fully understand the conditions which He here proclaims. Can we fairly refuse the application to ourselves to-day? or to ask whether there is not still, and for all of us, such a test remaining? or if the *spirit* of such discipleship must not be found with us at least in order to abide the test?

Our lot may be cast in so-called Christian times and lands, and the arm of open persecution may seem to be, if not shattered, at least so weakened, as to permit us to look upon a test of this kind, for most of us, as hardly to be made. Christian profession is mostly in repute; Christians themselves are in high places of authority, the government as a whole would not wish to be considered other than Christian. The world still exists, but, as the parables we have considered show, and as we all must recognize, has changed its tactics. As Pharisees and Sadducees followed John when all the rest were doing so, so the world largely follows Christ now, after its own worldly fashion. The Church too, bids for popularity, and does not disclaim but is glad of the alliance. Amid all this, is it not possible for the *spirit* of discipleship any longer to find a cross, when the Church and the world unite to say, "Lord, Lord," and you are only asked not to take too seriously the *things that He says?*

Some way it must surely be that the Lord's words here must have to us also, if we are disciples, some present application; and that straightforward obedience, in the laxest and easiest times, would (even on that very account) find penalty of some real kind in seeking to follow Christ according to His word rather than popular interpretations of it. If this be not just the losing life, this

say unto you that there are some of those [g]standing here who shall not taste of death until they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

[3] And [h]after six days Jesus taketh with [him] Peter and James and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart; and he was [i]transfigured

[3](xvii. 1-8): The glory as goal and portion beyond.

[g] *cf.* Mk. 9. 1 with 2 Pet. 1. 16-18. *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 51.
[h] Mk. 9. 2-10. Lk. 9. 27-36.
[i] *cf.* Rev. 1. 13-16. *cf.* Heb. 2. 9; *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 6.

cannot make it less imperative for one to suffer it; and good it is to go back in thought to times in which men in reality "suffered the loss of all things," and even "counted them but dung that they might win Christ." There can be no question that the Christ they went after in that way seemed to them unspeakably glorious; and for us it will be well indeed if, being the same Christ, He shine as bright.

The Lord closes here with that appeal to consider the soul's value which has rung through so many hearts since then: "For what shall a man be profited if he gain the whole world but lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" The question needs no answer: the impossibility to answer it *is* the answer. He adds, that it is the Son of man, soon to come in glory, who will render to every one according to his doings. Some of those standing there, moreover, should not taste of death until they saw the Son of man coming in His Kingdom.

[3] The reference made by one present at the Transfiguration (which now follows) to this as making visible "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. i. 16) should settle all question as to meaning of the last quoted words; opinions as to which have been, however, most various. The great variety has all arisen from taking "the Son of man coming in His Kingdom" in a non-natural way as applying to the destruction of Jerusalem and the going out of the gospel and its successes,—both entirely different things. The "Son of man coming in His Kingdom" is a plain reference to the vision of Daniel (vii. 13, 14), which indeed in like manner has been interpreted as applying to the "gospel dispensation," or the Kingdom in that "mystery" form in which we have seen it in the parables of the thirteenth chapter. But this is not the Kingdom of the Son of man as Daniel and the New Testament agree in representing it. We find the expression, no doubt, in the interpretation of the parable of the "tares of the field" (ver. 41) but only when in time of harvest the end of the present time is reached, and the Son of man (having come) sends forth His angels to gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend and those that work iniquity, and cast them into the furnace of fire. Then, clearly, the gospel dispensation will be over, and the Kingdom will have taken its open and millennial form.

That the Kingdom of the Son of man is not the present one, the Lord's words to the overcomer in Laodicea (Rev. iii. 21) make absolutely plain, in which He distinguishes between the throne on which He had sat down *with His Father*—where no mere man could ever sit—and *His own* throne, which He will share with His people.. The opening vision (chap. i. 13) assures us that it is *as* "Son of man" that He is speaking here. Thus, then, the "Son of man coming in His Kingdom" cannot refer to the present period.

The second epistle of Peter again helps us as to the meaning of the transfiguration, when it speaks of our being called "by glory and virtue" (i. 3). Glory at the end awaits us, to be reached by a pathway of trial, which necessitates "virtue" (or "courage") to endure it. The apostle evidently refers to what is recorded in the Gospel here, the transfiguration being directly spoken of in the latter part of the chapter, as we have already seen. In it he could not but realize the call of the glory. That which is at the end of the course is in it brought before the disciples at the beginning, to animate and strengthen them in view of what has just been declared as to the conditions of discipleship, and he can appeal to

before them, and his face shone as the sun, and his garments became white as the light. And behold, there appeared unto them [j] Moses and Elias talking with him. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Lord, it is [k] good for us to be here; if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one

[j] *cf.* Deut. 18. 15, 18 with Acts 3. 22. *cf.* Mal. 4. 4, 5.
[k] Ps. 73. 28.

it in proof that "we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty: for He received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came to Him such a voice from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; and this voice which came from heaven *we* heard, when we were with Him on the holy mount." Thus it is the goal before them that is here exhibited to them, but the glory of the Kingdom, not the still more wondrous glory of which John speaks, "the glory of the *Only* begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father." It is the human side that is here dwelt upon, though of course one cannot be separated from the other. John does not give us the transfiguration, because the *Only*-begotten (as such) cannot be transfigured.

The "after six days" with which the account begins, both here and in Mark, (in Luke differently expressed as "about an *eight* days after,") has reference, I believe, to the final character of what the scene here pictures, after the time of labor and of overcoming is fulfilled. The three disciples whom alone the Lord takes up with Him to witness it, point out to us the need of intimacy with Him such as only the comparatively few possess, if we would enjoy such disclosures. The "high mountain" most probably was Hermon, which was near Cæsarea Philippi, but it is not named, and were this certain, we could base nothing on it. Earth has in fact no knowledge of the elevations where such visions of the future may be enjoyed, though even yet it is not so poor as to be without them; and at these times and places it is still the Lord Himself who puts on special glory before the eyes of those so blest as to behold it, and who is the glorious Centre around which all else revolves. So it surely will be in the day of His coming which is here before us. His face will shine as the sun,* for with Him the day will come—the blessed day in which the watch-night ends; and His apparel will be as the light, for it is with the light the sun apparels itself. It is God who is manifested in Him, and God is light. Earth is no more an outcast, but brought nigh.

Another thing takes place which strikes them with special wonder. "And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him." In the two other Gospels there are slight differences which yet must have significance: Mark says, "Elias with Moses;" Luke, in evident accordance with the character of the truth as he presents it, presses the fact of *men* being in such a place: "two *men*, which were Moses and Elias." In Matthew the lawgiver and the prophet of judgment because of the broken law, are mentioned in the natural order to remind us of this relation to each other. And they are talking with Jesus: so they had been, we may say, all through the centuries. Law in its fulfilment and law in its non-fulfilment, both alike required and foretold Him whose coming as the Priest-King is the full end of them reached. With Elias judgment itself is in view of restoration, and the last note of the Old Testament prophecy ends with the announcement of his preparation work. Thus Moses and Elias have each a special suitability in connection with this anticipation of the coming of the King. The ages are thus seen all through in harmony; and with power in the hand of Christ eternal harmony is perfectly secured.

Peter's voice breaks in, even here, and with words which show how he has

* Notice, that it is only Matthew who says this. Mark draws attention altogether to His garments. Luke says, His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistering. The dispensational character of Matthew is here again strongly marked.

for Elias. While he was yet speaking, behold, a bright [l]cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved [m]Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell upon their faces, and were exceedingly afraid. But Jesus came to [them] and [n]touched them, saying, Arise and be not afraid. And when they lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, but Jesus only.

[4] And as they descended from the mountain, Jesus [o]charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no one un-

[4] (xvii. 9–13): "Cut off and having nothing."

[l] *cf.* Ex. 13. 21, 22. *cf.* Ex. 40. 34–38.
[m] ch. 3. 17. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 21.
[n] *cf.* Dan. 10. 10. *cf.* Rev. 1. 17.
[o] ch. 16. 20. *ctr.* Acts 9. 20.

failed to realize the meaning of the glorious vision. Terribly like his would-be followers to-day, he would enshrine the saints alongside of Christ, and make the Kingdom which is to come a present thing; giving, moreover, his help as if it were needed to accomplish this! But here he is stopped at once, and by an overwhelming spectacle: "There came a bright cloud and overshadowed them"—the well-known token of the Divine Presence as it had led Israel of old through the desert, and dwelt in the sanctuary,—"and behold a Voice out of the cloud which said: This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear *Him*." No wonder that, "when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces, and were sore afraid." It was, in fact, the holiest of all unveiled. They stood where, only once a year, and with covering incense and atoning blood, the feet of the high priest alone might stand. And they were but men of the people, no sacrifice in their hand, no covering incense, and the glorious Presence, which had long been absent from the temple,—nay, had never appeared since the captivity in Babylon,—was indeed here. He whom none could see and live, had drawn nigh to them, and they heard His voice, as the people had heard it of old, when they prayed, in their fear, that they might no more hear it.

Yet all else was changed from the time of the shaking mount. Nor was it the Law which was now proclaimed to them, a law which brought but the knowledge of sin, and was, indeed, its "strength" (1 Cor. xv. 56). This Voice pointed them but to the Son of God, whom Peter had but just now confessed as this, their own gracious Master; to put Him in His rightful place, and separate Him from all their misconceptions—from the misconceptions which, alas, have nevertheless followed Him since, and still follow Him. Moses and Elias had but been drawn thither by Him who had drawn them also, and opened heaven to them. Moses cannot open heaven, Elias brings but fire out of it, though he himself is caught away there: in Christ, the Son, the Father's Name is revealed, the object of the Father's heart is found, communion with God is attained, the throne of God becomes a throne of grace, His "Kingdom righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." (Rom. xiv. 17). In all this He is alone, and thus alone is to be heard.

He comes now, therefore, and touches them, and says what He alone is able to say to such as we are, "Arise, and be not afraid." And now all else has disappeared: they see no man but Jesus only.

Here we have, then, the central features of the Kingdom, as Christ Himself will introduce it. In Moses and Elias, the dead and the living saints are represented; the glory in which He is seen is that of the Son of man; and the glory of His Father is also here. Thus the hearts of the disciples are strengthened in view of the cross by the knowledge of the end before them. "The knowledge of His glory" is given to sustain them by the way: "glory and virtue" are linked together as principles of the divine calling; for "if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."

[4] After all, as yet even these favored disciples know little of what is implied by this glorious vision; and the rest seem not to have been prepared for it in any way, so that it is forbidden to be told them. It would not have given light, but dazzled. They themselves, as Mark tells us, did not know what the

til the Son of man be risen from among the dead. And the disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes, that Elias must first come? But he answered and said unto them, [p] Elias indeed cometh and shall restore all things; but I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they did not recognize him, but did unto him whatsoever they would. So also the Son of man is about to suffer from them. Then the disciples understood that he spake to them of John the Baptist.

[p] ch. 11. 14. Lk. 1. 17. Mal. 4. 5. Mk. 9. 11-13.

5 (xvii. 14-21): The conditions of availability of entrusted power.

5 And [q] when they came to the multitude, there came to him a man falling on his knees to him and saying, Lord, have pity upon my son, for he is lunatic and suffereth sorely: for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water; and I brought him to thy [r] disciples, and they could not heal him. And Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I bear with you? bring

[q] Mk. 9. 14-29. Lk. 9. 37-42. *cf.* Ps. 72. 4-6. *cf.* Is. 51. 21-23.

[r] *cf.* ch. 10. 1, 8. *cf.* John 14. 12. *cf.* Is. 63. 5.

rising *from* the dead of which He spoke could mean; yet it was to be so soon the heart of their message. That Elias was to come and restore all things, as the scribes declared, they could not reconcile with the fact that Messiah was here, and as to the general condition nothing seemed accomplished. Elias they had just seen, but in what different connection! and the very glory of the heavenly vision only seemed, doubtless, to show the more the darkness of things on earth. They turn to Him with this question, which He answers with the assurance that Elias was indeed to come and to restore; but he had already come unrecognized, and men had treated him according to what was in their hearts. So too the Son of man was presently to suffer from them. And then they know that He has been speaking of John the Baptist.

But in fact it was difficult for them to reconcile what was so opposite: Messiah upon whom all depended for them, yet cut off and having nothing. And the divine purpose could not fail; but how could they imagine a victory by defeat, a cross as the way to glory? Israel rejecting also and rejected, and yet the promises to be fulfilled to her in spite of all. In fact, as Christians, we from another side have found it hard to keep the even balance of truth as to just these things. John was the Elias for his day, but "if they would receive it," as the Lord had already declared. It was in the wisdom of God that he should be so offered them for their acceptance, that there might be the complete trial of man thus: John being "sent to bear witness of that Light" whom he preceded, and who yet (as Light) needed no such witness, if they had had eyes to see. Alas, they had not eyes or hearts; and Elias, for the fulfilment of the message of Malachi, has yet to come, as Christ has also, to bring in the blessing of Israel to a repentant people. Meanwhile more wondrous purposes are being disclosed.

5 The weakness and folly of man (which are but his perversity) are now exhibited among those who have received Christ, and have received from Him also a power which they are not competent to use. It is this which the case of the lunatic child is evidently intended to impress upon us. The disciples had been applied to, to cast out the demon, for which they had had authority given them by the Lord, and they had failed to do so. The father brings his child to Christ with this statement; and it is this which forces from Him the groan over a "faithless and perverse generation" by whom the love which bound Him to them was made to suffer through their unbelief. Seldom does the Lord exhibit to us so clearly the trial of uncongeniality which was His amid His chosen associates. Here it is openly exhibited, and the occasion was such as to require that the cause of a failure which had been manifest should be manifest also.

him hither to [s]me. And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon went out from him; and the child was healed from that hour. Then the disciples came to Jesus apart and said to him, Why could not we cast it out? And he saith unto them, Because of your [t]little faith: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-[seed], ye shall say to this mountain, Depart hence to yonder place, and it shall depart; and nothing shall be impossible to you. But this kind goeth not out, except by [u]prayer and fasting.

[s] *cf.* ch. 14. 18. *cf.* Jno. 15. 5. *cf.* Phil. 4. 13.

[t] *cf.* ch. 16. 8. *cf.* ch. 21. 21. *cf.* Lk. 17. 6.

[u] *cf.* Acts 13. 2, 3. *cf.* 2 Cor. 12. 9.

SUBDIVISION 5. (Chap. xvii. 22–xx. 28.)

Responsibility and Reward.

1 (xvii. 22-27): The place of sons of God, but to be held in grace.

1. AND while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man is about to be [v]delivered up into the hands of men; and they will kill him; and on the third day he shall be raised up: and they were grieved exceedingly.

[v] ch. 16. 21. Mk. 9. 30-32. Lk. 9. 43-45.

But *He* remained still, only the more seen as the unique dependence of His people. "Bring him to Me," is the assurance of resources that cannot be overtaxed, at the command of a love that cannot be too absolutely relied on. Accordingly the demon departs, and the child is healed. Matthew does not give us the details which we find in Mark, but leaves thus the main point clearer, the glorious power so freely used, where disciples have failed, with all else. But the failure must be searched out, and the disciples themselves inquire about it. They are not conscious of the cause of it, which the Lord had already implicitly declared, and now does explicitly: "Because of your little faith: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Depart hence, and it shall depart; and nothing shall be impossible to you." This implies, of course, that we are on the path of His appointment for us: for, indeed, faith is impossible for any other; and the suggestive figure of the mountain speaks clearly of the disappearance of the most firmly rooted obstacles in a path like this. In the path of self-will and self-indulgence, how vain would it be to expect anything of this kind! And this the closing words here show: for "prayer" is vain—"we ask and have not," when we "ask amiss, to consume it upon our lusts"—or "pleasures" (Jas. iv. 3);—and "fasting," if it is to have any spiritual value, implies self-mortification. People often speak of having (or *not* having) faith for the path; the truth is, we must have the *path* for *faith*: faith for any other path than God's is plainly an impossibility.

SUBD. 5.

The responsibilities of the Kingdom follow, by an easy transition, upon the principles of it as thus declared; closing with a view of the rewards of grace in which love will satisfy itself at the end of the way. We have here, not merely the fact that there are such, but the doctrine as to them—a most important one—and giving us a precious and wonderful insight into heaven itself, which is a sweet and how fitting conclusion to all this part. After this the Lord presents Himself openly to Israel, and the final scenes draw on.

1. The governing principle is what comes first before us; and this, as we have seen, is the cross. Accordingly the Lord again speaks of it to His disciples now. He does not apply it; and nothing further is connected with it here, except the exceeding grief of His disciples. But it is not difficult to trace it as in moral connection with what follows. The Son of God as Son of man passing through the world, is not discerned by the men of it. Had they possessed this wisdom, "they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." True, it was guilty ignor-

And when they came into Capernaum they that received the half-shekel* came to Peter and said, Doth not your teacher [w]pay the half-shekel? He saith, Yea. And when he came into the house, Jesus anticipated him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? from their sons, or from strangers? And when he said, From

[w] *cf.* Ex. 38. 26.

*Literally, "the didrachma," equivalent to the Jewish half-shekel, which was the annual tribute for the temple-service. The value of the shekel is variously estimated at from 2*s.* 3*d.* to over 3*s.* or from 50 to 70 cents.

ance, the result of being so absolutely in contrast with Him spiritually; and the followers of their Master are, just in proportion as they resemble Him, in the same way unknown. "Therefore the world knoweth us not," says the apostle, "because it knew Him not" (1 John iii. 1). Being thus rejected, He accepts it without contention, and in this too calls upon His disciples to follow Him. At Capernaum those that collected the half-shekel which was the temple-tribute, come to Peter and ask him: "Doth not your Teacher pay the half-shekel?" He at once answers, in entire forgetfulness of the glory of Him whom He had confessed as the Son of God, that He did pay it. If it were the atonement-money, the dishonor done to Him would be most manifest, yet the Lord raises no question upon this ground; and, according to the institution of Ex. xxx. 11–16 that was only required upon the occasion of a numbering of the children of Israel. Joash, however, refers to it (2 Chron. xxiv. 6), when urging contributions for the temple-service; but evidently as a precedent only, as the restrictions of the law were not carried out in the answer to his exhortation. "After the return from the captivity," says Farrar, "this *bekah*, or half-shekel, became a voluntary annual tax of a third of a shekel"—showing it was hardly looked at as carrying out the original enactment of the law of Moses—"but at some subsequent period had again returned to its original amount." The Lord treats it as a simple temple-tribute, but even on this ground cannot let pass the question of its claim upon Him. He does more than as such resist it for Himself: He puts His rash and forgetful disciple along with Himself, as free.

He does not wait for Peter's question, but shows His divine knowledge by anticipating it. "What thinkest thou, Simon?" He asks; "from whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? from their sons, or from strangers?" There could be but one answer: "From strangers." "Surely then," the Lord replies, "the sons are free."

But, though He vindicate this liberty, in practice He does not insist upon it. Personal right one is always entitled to surrender, and the "giving offence"—the causing spiritual injury—to any one, by any claim of it, though misunderstood wholly, *that* were indeed for Him, the Lord and yet the Servant of His people's need, impossible to be thought of. "But that we may not give them offence, go to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that cometh up first; and when thou hast opened its mouth, thou shalt find a shekel: that take, and give unto them for me and thee."

Thus He veils His glory, yet declaring it in the very way in which He veils it. To summon a fish of the sea to pay the tribute for Him, guards indeed well His glory, as the Lord of that higher temple *which Israel's temple figured*, and which is the universe that His hands have made (Heb. ix. 23, 24). There is not even the appearance of compromise as to what He is, and only His grace is shown in thus stooping. Not an adversary even can cavil at it; and the weakest instead of stumbling, can find in it only measureless comfort in the realization of this union of power and grace in Him.

But not only so: as "Son over" this "house of God" (Heb. iii. 1–6), He can make others free of it (John viii. 36). Yea, He can set free the very slaves—

[x] strangers, Jesus said unto him, Surely then the sons are free. But that we may not give them offence, go to the [y] sea and cast a hook, and take the fish that cometh up first; and when thou hast opened its mouth, thou shalt find a shekel *: that take and give to them for me and thee.

x *cf.* Is.60.10, 16, 17. *cf.* Is.49.23.
y *cf.* Rev.17. 15 with Is. 60. 3-9. *cf.* Hag.2.7 -9.

2 (xviii. 1-14): The lowliness which exalts.
1 (1-5): needed for entrance into the Kingdom.

2. [1] At that time the disciples came unto him, saying, [z] Who, then, is the greater in the kingdom of heaven? And he called to him a little child, and set it in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.

z Mk. 9. 33-37. Lk.9.46-48.

* *Greek:* "stater;" equal to a shekel.

and there is no slavery in God's universe but that of sin—and make them sons of the house of which He is Master. And this is what He shows us now in Peter, the representative disciple, as we have so lately seen him. The fish brings the tribute-money for him also, a piece which is the equivalent of *two* half-shekels: "For Me and thee," the Lord says; not "for *us*": for if He had not His unique glory, *we* could not have our blessing. "For Me," and so, through My grace, "for thee:" and in this (or what is implied in it) we all have part.

We, through His grace, are sons of God, and free. Yet must we be content to wait for the time when we shall be recognized as this, and in the meanwhile to pay tribute, as if we were not what we are. Not expecting recognition, and not claiming rights, and earnest to avoid giving offence by any self-assertion, our privilege, as well as our responsibility, is to walk in the steps of Him with whom the path of humiliation and of service was His choice and glory.

2. [1] This lowliness of spirit is now insisted on in the strongest way, the Lord using a little child as His text throughout, and in answer to a question proposed by His disciples which evidenced their need of such instruction. There had been a dispute among them, the other synoptists tell us, as to who among them should be the greater. The Lord's words about the keys to Peter, and His joining him with Himself in payment of the temple-tax, may have led to this; but the cause is not stated, nor is it important. The important thing was the condition of soul which the question itself revealed. *Greatness* was what they sought; and in that which they owned to be the Kingdom of heaven, yet which (as they are shown later) they are making but a kingdom of the Gentiles in their thoughts, a place for the gratification of ambition and self-seeking. In this a little child was capable of being their instructor. Jesus called to Him a little child, and placed him in the midst of them and said, with one of His emphatic affirmations, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise ENTER into the Kingdom of heaven."

The question was here a more fundamental one than that which they had started. One must *enter* it, in order to be great in it; and ambition could not even *enter*. It is plain that, while merely the ordinary term is used here, which applies both to the mystery- and the final form of the Kingdom, yet it is of the latter both the disciples and the Lord are speaking. They have in mind the time when "greatness" will be estimated by the King, and receive its reward, and the Lord states the necessary condition for even entrance into it at that time.

The word for "be converted" is simply "turn yourselves," though surely here having reference to that spiritual change, for which a compound form of it is generally used, of somewhat stronger meaning. The little child as a symbol reminds us of the way in which God has ordained that men should enter the present life, most surely in lowliness and feebleness enough. The long drill and discipline of childhood might well seem intended to "hide pride from man,"

Whosoever then shall humble himself as this little [a]child, *he* is the greater in the kingdom of heaven. And whosoever shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me.

[a] Lk. 18. 14, 17. *cf.* Ps. 131. 2.

2 (6-9): offences against little ones.

[2] But whosoever shall [b]offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a great millstone had been hanged about his neck, and he sunk in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of offences! for offences must needs come; but woe to the man by whom the offence cometh! And if thy [c]hand or thy foot cause thee to offend, cut it off and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter lame or maimed into life, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire. And if thine eye cause thee to offend, pluck it out and cast it from thee: it is good for thee with one eye to enter into life, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the hell of fire.

[b] Mk. 9. 42. Lk. 17. 1, 2. *cf.* Rom. 14. 13, 15. 21.

[c] ch. 5. 29, 30. Mk. 9. 43–48.

3 (10-14): the Father's face and heart.

[3] See that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you that their [d]angels in heaven continually behold the face of my Father who is heaven. For the

[d] *cf.* Acts 12. 15 with 2 Cor. 5. 8.

and the mercy of God it is that provides for beings so helpless, the love and care which after all, in such a world as this, so generally wait upon the birth of children. So also is it with the beginning of spiritual life, which we enter not as doers of something great, but in feebleness and poverty to receive grace, not due. And the end is as the beginning: it is in grace we grow; at the end as at the beginning, it is salvation that we receive; reward at last is not claim but *mercy*. In this way it is as little children that the Kingdom of heaven must be entered; and in proportion to the simplicity with which this is done will the true character of the Kingdom be attained. "A little child" may, indeed, have in its heart the seed of ambition as of all other evil, but not the man who estimates himself but as that. To him no ambitious thought is possible. While the Lord in His grace identifies Himself with the least of His own; so as to assure every one that his littleness will not make him of little account to *Him*. This is an assurance which prevents the consciousness of nothingness becoming a distress; nay, rather, enables us only the more to realize the sweetness of a love so great.

[2] Thus it wraps itself about the objects of it, like a mother with a babe, and grows, as one might think, passionate in denouncing those who would injure them. "But whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a great mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he sunk in the depth of the sea;"—so does God care for the feeblest of His own!

But offences would come: "woe to the world because of" them; yea, "woe to the man by whom the offence cometh!" And here the Lord repeats, with more general application, what He had said in the sermon on the mount with more special reference to the seventh commandment of the law. Better to cut off hand or foot,—better to pluck out an eye, if it caused offence, than to retain these and be cast into the hell of fire. It is the Saviour of men, He who died in His love to redeem them, who ever gives the most earnest and emphatic warning of that to which sin of necessity brings those who cleave to it.

[3] But His heart turns to what is more congenial: "See that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you that their angels in heaven continually behold the face of My Father who is in heaven." Well, then, may they be held in loving regard by men. But the doctrine of the passage has its difficulty. De Wette, as quoted by Lange, says with regard to it: "In the Old

Son of man came to save that which was [e]lost. What think ye? If a man have a [f]hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine upon the mountains, and go and seek that which is gone astray? And if it be that he find it,

e Lk. 19. 10. *cf.* Rom. 3. 23 with Rom. 5.12.
f Lk.15.4–7.

Testament we only read of guardian angels of empires (Dan. x. 13, 20). But at a later period the Jews believed also in the existence of guardian angels for individuals (Targum of Jonathan on Gen. xxxiii. 10, xxxv. 10, xlviii. 16). Similarly also the New Testament (Acts xii. 7?)" Yet he takes it as figurative, in which way it would be hard to understand it. Meyer, approved by Lange, in opposition to this says, "The belief in guardian angels is clearly admitted by Christ." Probably most agree with this; Dr. Brown remarks: "Among men, those who nurse and rear the royal children, however humble in themselves, are allowed free entrance with their charge, and a degree of familiarity which even the highest state ministers dare not assume. Probably our Lord means that, in virtue of their charge over His disciples (Heb. i. 14; John i. 51), the angels have *errands* to the Throne, a welcome there, and a dear familiarity in dealing with His Father which is in heaven, which on their own matters they could not assume." This, however, seems too much like the state of an earthly court, from which it is rash to draw analogies for heaven. The difficulty as to interpreting our Lord's words as referring to guardian angels is that it seems a very indecisive passage to stand alone for the doctrine, which assuredly the verses in Hebrews and in John's Gospel do not teach. Daniel more nearly approaches it, though the angels representing the empires there seem all to be evil, and only Michael as "prince" of the Jewish people is really in any sense a "guardian" (see Dan. x. 21).

But the Lord's words seem to apply strictly to "little children," and not simply to believers as designated in that way. He is not telling His disciples not to despise believers, but certainly what might seem to them comparatively of little account, which believers as such would not. (Comp. chap. xix. 13.) On the other hand, we have no reason that I am aware of, for introducing into what is here the additional thought that there is restriction even among the unfallen angels as to seeing the Father's face. The fallen condition in which we are is that, rather, one would suppose, which makes such a restriction seem necessary or natural.

The passage in the Acts referred to, though commonly taken to imply also the Jewish doctrine of guardian angels, hardly seems capable of being reconciled with it: for why should a guardian angel assume Peter's voice, so as to be mistaken for him? and in this place Brown interprets "his angel" to be "his disembodied spirit, his ghost." The two passages in this case would strengthen one another; and the children's angels, or spirits, being permitted to behold the Father's face in heaven would be indeed an admonition not to despise them, as well as an unspeakable comfort as to the condition of an infant after death.

The next clause is omitted in some ancient MSS. and versions, and it has been thought to be an insertion from Luke xix. 10; but, as others have remarked, the omission of "to seek"—simply, "the Son of man came to *save* that which is lost"—is significant. They are lost ones needing a Saviour; but *seeking* implies a condition of active wandering from God such as in their case is hardly begun yet.

His own joy in salvation—the joy of the Shepherd over a lost sheep found—the Lord then emphatically declares. It is but a glimpse of what we have in Luke poured fully out, and here without the contrast of Pharisees with "tax-gatherers and sinners," there brought out so vividly. The ninety and nine in this case seem but brought in to emphasize how the *one* lost has concentrated upon him in the meantime *all* the solicitude, and, when found, the tenderness of the Shepherd, as if there were not another. Yet this over-abounding joy

3 (15-20): Holiness and satisfaction in the place of Christ's Name.
1 (15-18): Authority to maintain holiness given to the assembly.

verily I say unto you that he rejoiceth more over it than over the ninety and nine that went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.

3. [1] But if thy [g]brother sin [against thee],* go and show him his fault between thee and him alone: if he hear

g Lk. 17.3,4. cf. Gal.6.1,2. cf. Eph. 4. 30-32.

*Some old MSS. omit "against thee."

does not, in fact, disparage the interest in them which is only for the moment not in the same way realized. Let any of *these* become the lost, they too would arouse the same anxiety and tenderness. In Luke the parable is uttered to a different audience, and in other circumstances which combine to present these ninety and nine in a manner in some respects very different from this.

Here it is the Father's will which He has come to carry out, and it is not the Father's will that one of these little ones should perish. How sweet and perfect an assurance! It is only the contrary will of man that hinders his salvation: on God's part there *can* be no contrary one: "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." Thus the little ones removed from us by death we may trust confidently to the divine love which waits on them. Our assurance as to them is rooted in the unchangeableness of the divine nature.

3. The Lord goes on to speak of holiness, which is also absolutely characteristic of God, and which must be maintained by all who are associated with His name on earth: "Let him that nameth the name of the Lord," says the apostle, "depart from iniquity." The assembly comes here, therefore, into a special place of responsibility; and for the first time we find it assuming a position and exercising powers for which He has endowed it with authority as representing Him. On the other hand, in most suited connection with this, we find His people reminded of their weakness and dependence upon Him: a dependence which, when realized, brings in that assured and ready help which makes it but a means of realizing in turn the resources and nearness of the living God. The whole is crowned with the assurance of His presence in the midst, where two or three are gathered to His Name; and this at once seals their commission to maintain what is due to Him under whose authority they act, and pledges Him to meet all their necessities.

But this is another text which, having been variously interpreted, calls for careful examination at our hands.

[1] The disciples having been charged to avoid what would be offence against another, and as to themselves rather to get rid of what might seem like hand or foot than go on with what was matter of offence, are now taught how to deal with sin in another.

But at once question begins: What *is* the sin which we have to do with here? and are we to take it as generally taken, as simply personal trespass? For some of the most ancient MSS. and some editors omit the "against thee" of the common version, and have only "if thy brother sin," which would seem to make it wider. This can however, I think, be better settled as we go on, and we may leave it for the present undecided.

But undoubtedly we are to remember that, in any case, the thing to be considered by us is what the Lord calls "sin," and we must not allow ourselves to admit practically a lighter word than that. "*Sin*," whether it be against oneself or not, is something which should bring up at once before us the psalmist's deep realization, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned" (Ps. li. 4); words which only appear the more striking as we think of the dreadful character of that which he had committed against his neighbor. Sin can only be viewed rightly as against *God;* and to treat it so we must be before God about it. We must know how, in Old Testament language, to eat the sin-offering in the holy place.

thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he do not hear [thee], take with thee one or two more, that by the mouth of [h]two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he will not listen to them, tell it

[h] 2 Cor. 13. 1. Deut. 19. 15.

This is the only fully effectual corrective of the danger from any personal element, wherever (as in the present case is generally taken for granted) that may be found. In the presence of God sin is truly judged, but therefore judged in ourselves first; and so it is we obtain that "spirit of meekness," in which alone we are able to "restore" those "overtaken in a fault" as considering our own proneness to temptation (Gal. vi. 1). That is the first thought here, and always as regarding one who has sinned—restoration: "if he shall hear thee, thou hast *gained thy brother.*" There is not to be the thought, as presently and plainly insisted on, of "pay me that thou owest," but of gaining a brother: of winning him back to all that belongs to Christian brotherhood. For sin means collapse, estrangement from this,—a shadow over the glory of "what is really life," and dishonor to Christ and to God. How in the apprehension of this, could one even think of one's own things, save as one may truly find them in the thought of a "brother"!

And this governs all in this first step taken: "go and show him his fault"—literally, "convict him," bring him to conviction—"between thee and him *alone.*" Let there be no needless exposure, no pain that can be spared, nothing that would arouse resentment, and so most surely hinder recovery. He is to feel that, as Elihu with Job, you *desire* to justify him,—if that may not be, yet to put his case into his own hands for trial, and lift him up into the Christian place of judgeship, master of himself once more.

Grace is in anywise the only power over sin. It is not laxity, as people misconceive it, but always sin's unsparing enemy and scourge. "Sin shall not have dominion over you, because ye are not under law, but under grace." Yet how often do those who are themselves wholly debtors to grace, use the law without hesitation in their dealings with one another. Of course, they betray in this their own slight knowledge, while the fruit is reaped in failure to maintain the holiness they seek. We cannot, by our will to do it, make that which is the "strength of sin" become its antidote.

But if this, then, be the divine principle in dealing with it, it is plain that whether it is sin against myself or against another can make no difference. This does not come into consideration, and the reading which would leave it out seems practically right. If it is grace that is moving me for a brother's deliverance, it can make no difference against whom the sin is. Nay, if it is in my brother, it is against me necessarily, if not directly: it injures me, aggrieves me, as one of the family. It will in any case work the same misery: it is equally against God my Father, against Christ my Lord, and against the soul of him who has committed it; while again grace requires not to find a legal title to proceed, as in my own matters, but in the needs to which it ministers finds its sufficient justification. In any case, the principle applies, wherever and so far as the circumstances permit the application; there is supposed, as we see, a condition of things in which love finds its call and opportunity, and which cannot, perhaps, and need not, be further defined.

The next step to be taken, if the first be ineffectual, is to "take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." These witnesses are not to establish the truth of the charge: for of this the one who has sinned is already "convicted," but to bring the influence of the truth to bear upon him the more by their confirmation. They are a jury of appeal to make him realize the gravity rather than the truth of his sin,—a midway step between the private reasoning and the full publicity of the assembly. Love would yet spare the person, while it cannot spare the sin; and therefore the present procedure.

to the [i]assembly; but if he will not listen even to the assembly, let him be unto thee as a [j]Gentile and a tax-gatherer. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall

[i] ch. 16. 18. *cf.* 1 Cor. 5. 4. *cf.* 1 Tim. 3. 15.
[j] *cf.* 2 Thess. 3. 14, 15; *cf.* 1 Cor. 5. 9-13.

The third appeal is to the assembly as a whole, which is defined in what follows as a gathering to the name of Christ. It is astonishing that any could have had the thought here of the Jewish synagogue, although it is true that the Christian assembly did not yet exist, and that the Lord is speaking anticipatively; but the same could be said in general of what is before us in all this part of Matthew. The Christian assembly has as yet only once been spoken of, and in the present case it is a local one—a "gathering," for which we must wait historically for the Acts. Here we have it strikingly for the first time as entrusted with the maintenance of holiness in connection with Christ's Name on earth. It is, as we see, the last court of appeal, and to whose acts He gives, in the most solemn way, authoritative sanction. The case is left in its hands for final decision, which is supposed to be in accordance with what has been done before; and now, "if he refuse to hear the assembly, let him be unto thee as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer."

This is the fourth step therefore: the man is now to be treated as in an outside place, as a Gentile, a "man of the nations," by itself expresses. A "tax-gatherer" adds to this the thought of having lost the place inside by his unworthiness. The outside place is manifest: of course, in the Lord's lips it could not mean any dismissal of care and thought and labor after the one so treated. It is one of that hated class—the tax-gatherers—who records, and alone records, this injunction: himself the most signal example of the grace that sought all such. On the other hand, while business intercourse and communications might go on, even in all this would it be but the more apparent that what was Christian had come to an end, till divine grace should restore it. The Christian in the world was to be but the reflex of his Master's mind; and as surely as *He* could not go on with sin, no more could those who were to act on earth for Him who had left it.

It is true that it is said here, "let him be to *thee*," and this is the binding of this conduct on the individual; but any proper consideration given to the matter will assure us that this could not possibly mean that this refusal of Christian fellowship was to be merely on the part of the one against whom the sin had been. Were the witnesses who had shown their sympathy up to this point with the brother who had been sinned against, now to withdraw it, and go on in fellowship with him they had condemned, because the case was *not their own?* Was the brother offended, and to whom at least this *must* apply, to act in such a way, not because of the *sin*, but because he himself was the person wronged? How this would destroy the whole character of discipline, as well as the spiritual character of Christian fellowship!

The assembly would be little Christian which could become partner to any thing of this sort, or look at sin as having merely a particular reference, and not being the general concern of all. The next verse also, which applies, of course, to the assembly as a whole, negatives absolutely any such conclusion. For here, in the fifth place, the numerical order certifying it as a principle of divine government in the kingdom of God at hand,—the power of God allying itself here to human weakness—the Lord adds, with one of His "verilies," the oath for confirmation, which is an end of all dispute: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

The Church on earth acts for its absent Lord; and, as so acting, He gives it His authority with the broad seal of royalty attached to the commission. Without this it could not move in the regulation of such matters at all: all the authority that it has is delegated to it by the King; it is not a democracy, but a monarchy most absolute,—a Kingdom not of man but of God.

[k] bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

2 (19): The assurance to united prayer.

[2] Again I say unto you, that if two of you [l] agree on earth concerning any matter about which they may ask, it shall come to pass for them from my Father who is in heaven.

[k] ch. 16. 19.

[l] *cf.* Heb. 13. 18. *ctr.* Acts 5. 9.

It is plainly also in the moral sphere that the commission applies; and this at once makes known its limitations. In nothing so plainly as in the moral sphere is every thing based upon the character of God Himself. Every thing here is fixed, therefore, and unchangeable. The Church cannot so much as define what good or evil is. Every conscience here is subject to God alone, and the only appeal to it is as the appeal of light to the eye—the appeal of self-evidence. The eye may be diseased, the conscience hardened, the appeal useless; but this is always a result of rejecting the light: the light itself is divine, not human; and brings the soul before God, not man, not the Church. The rule of conscience means in result the rule of God, just as that of the eye would mean that of the light. Though light and the eye are very different things, yet the "light of the body is the eye."

The Church is a body not legislative but executive: it does not decree what shall be, but decides upon what *is*. It has authority to act, but upon lines laid down for it; and authority to act does not guarantee the action. But unless the action be according to His mind, it should be plain that the Lord could not sanction it. He could not "bind" sin upon one who had not sinned, nor "loose" it where there had been no repentance. This would be to put evil for good and good for evil, and to put the Church above her Lord. Either, then, the Church's action is secured infallibly, or there are conditions implied which we shall be able to gather from the context.

In the specified case to which this assurance is appended, it is abundantly plain that it is a case of real "sin:" "if thy brother sin." Of this he is to be convicted, and witnesses brought in, and then it is to be told to the assembly. This is the case in which the assembly is authorized to act, and only in such plain cases. As far as we read here, if the case were not plain,—if there were not, therefore, agreement about it,—it would not be such as would give title, or (to speak better) impose responsibility, to act at all. It must be in the light, not in the dark, we walk. The fact is, that it is not here that the Church has ever realized its real difficulties, although, of course, here also there may be unfaithfulness to the Lord, and what is to be done then is not yet taken up. We are here at the beginning of things, and must expect, in this, as in other matters, to have the truth gradually unfolded to us. The point is here, that the Church is guardian of the holiness to be always associated with the profession of the name of the Lord; there is no question at present of doctrine at all, and it would be premature to speak of it yet in any explicit way; though something may be inferred in what almost immediately follows: but that is another thing.

[2] The sense of responsibility should lead ever to the sense of weakness, and this is the order of thought here. Remembering the need of His people, the Lord now assures them of the way in which they may count upon Him for the supply of all their need. And, like Him, He does not limit it to this or any particular need: "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree together on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father who is in heaven." Above all is this assurance needed where, as the connection would imply, and in some measure the agreement also, the acting together as representatives of Christ on earth is that as to which need is realized. Here one cannot but feel the grace of this lowest possible number for consent or united action. Supposing there were no more together in a place, or that others failed to realize the need, yet here would the Lord meet those who did so. Thus, while not necessarily implying the failure of His people, He provides for it. How tender are these all-seeing Eyes that contemplate us!

3 (20): the place of His presence.

3 For [m] where two or three are gathered together unto my name, there am I in the midst of them.

[m] *cf.* Acts 20. 7. *cf.* 1 Cor. 11. 20.

cf. Deut. 12. 5; *ctr.* 1 Cor. 1. 10-13.

3 And He adds this assurance, the unspeakable comfort of His people ever since: "For where two or three are gathered together unto My Name, there am I in the midst of them."

It is not "*in* My Name," as in the common version, but "unto:" His name being thus the central point of gathering. "*In* His name" would be by His authority, or as representing Himself: both things, of course, true, but neither of them defining, as this does, the Christian assembly. His Name speaks of doctrine—the truth of what He is, Himself being absent; and where He, apprehended by faith, thus draws His people together, there He promises Himself to be among them, their sufficient resource and the sanction of what they do in the manner already enjoined to maintain in love the holiness of His name.

It should be evident that more is intended here than to declare His readiness to meet the need of two or three who unite to supplicate Him in some common interest. This is simply appended to what has been before enjoined in the matter of assembly discipline, and both are sealed with this final promise of His presence where two or three are gathered to His name: words which must apply to the assembly so gathered. His presence in their midst is more directly called for by their action in the first case as representing Him than by their supplication in the second. Compare the apostle's words to the Corinthians (1 Cor. v. 3-5), though the Lord's here are so much more, as He is Himself beyond all other.

No body of people gathered to aught but the truth as to what Christ is could have any claim to the promise here, as none who fulfil this condition could be excluded. If those are admitted among the orthodox who are themselves unorthodox, and this be deliberate, then it is plain His Name ceases to be that to which such a company is gathered. The orthodoxy even of the mass cannot make up for the failure as to the gathering-point. However many the Christians there, the *gathering* is not Christian.

A false Christ is not Christ; deliberately held to, it is the *denial* of Christ; and here it is important to remember that *ignorance* is by no means the same thing as *denial*, which assumes knowledge. As to the blessed Person of the Lord His own words declare our common ignorance as to much: "No man knoweth the Son but the Father." But that which Scripture declares of Him is by that fact no longer to be beyond our knowledge, but what is committed to our trust as the vital centre of all truth and blessing. Christ is the manifestation of God, the Redeemer of men; as the Word of God, by whom and *for* whom all things were created, He is the Sum of all knowledge that is really such. Aberration here is quick distortion of all other things. Thus "gathered to My name" is vital to the Assembly. They are in the world as His representatives; the Spirit by which they are baptized into one body is in them to glorify Him. How would every thing be lost if His Church could accept a substitute for Him; or allow the darkening of one glory of the "Light of men"!

Here, then, is the Church as it is presented to us for the second time and in living activity in the Gospel of Matthew. In no other Gospel is it presented to us at all. And here it is seen, as we may say, according to the constant character of Matthew, as in the Kingdom, and in the exercise of authority suited to the Kingdom of heaven. We have nothing as yet of the Body of Christ, or of espousal to Him; nothing of it even as indwelt of the Holy Spirit, nor explicitly as the house of God—though it is what He builds, and Peter and such as he are "stones" in the building: a building instinct with glorious life, against which the gates of hades cannot prevail: a living Church, manifesting its life in love and holiness, finding its centre of attraction and controlling authority in Him who is its Creator and Lord, refusing all other. Such is the picture given to us in the Gospels.

SECTION 4. (Chap. xviii. 21-35.)

The failure in mercy of one who has received mercy.

1 (21, 22): Grace to be constant.

[1] Then Peter came and said to him, Lord, [n] how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until [o] seventy times seven.

2 (23-27): The debtor forgiven.

[2] Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a human king * who would have a reckoning with his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, there was brought to him one who owed him [p] ten thousand

n *cf.* Ps. 78. 40. ver. 15.

o Lk. 17.3,4. *cfr.* Gen. 4. 24.

p *cf.* Ps. 40. 12.

* Literally, "a man, a king."

Sec. 4.

We have now a solemn word upon the responsibility of showing grace in a day of grace. In His teaching as to prayer the Lord has already warned us to the same effect, in words which are almost identical with those which close the parable before us. But here the principle is shown us in the full extent of its application, and enforced in the most absolute way.

[1] The first object in dealing with a brother who has sinned is, as we have seen, restoration. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. Forgiveness is necessarily grounded upon the "hearing," for that alone would show restoration. But Peter has a question here: how often is there to be forgiveness? The Rabbins had already decided as to this, and their limit was three times. Peter has so far appreciated the spirit of the Lord's words as to more than double this number. Seven was the perfect number: shall his forgiveness of an offending brother be "till seven times"? But the Lord answers, He has put no such limit; and then He puts one which is practically none at all: "I say not unto thee, until seven times, but until *seventy times* seven." I suppose it would test Christian grace in us, to go even half way to such a boundary line; but the Lord does not mean us seriously to contemplate this. Could it be a question how often I should *gain my brother?* Peter is after all still viewing things from the stand-point of personal rights. He must still be seeking in some measure his own; but "love seeketh not her own." Hence the personal element still rules here—"sin against me, and I." The Lord takes up, therefore, this very side of things, but to turn it in another direction: "how oft shall I sin against God, and God forgive *me?*" If there be no limit here, and I am in the sense of this, how can this question of Peter be asked at all?

[2] The similitude which the Lord draws for us here is necessarily a similitude of the Kingdom of heaven. It is not after all a picture of *perfect* grace, such as we know it in God, although this is as nearly approached as possible for the purpose of the illustration; and, of course, it is a true presentation of God, in no wise inconsistent with the fullest grace. But the Lord will not image one of His own people in the picture that He gives of this unmerciful servant. He is one with the responsibility of such a profession, but without the *real* apprehension of divine grace, as his conduct shows. Hence the grace shown to him is not the unconditional grace of the gospel, but that which, in fact, is manifested in the Kingdom, as in "*baptism* for the remission of sins" (Acts ii. 38) where the grace witnessed to is manifestly conditioned, as here, upon the truth of discipleship. The Kingdom, as we see in the parables, embraces the true and the false, and in it all is governmental, conditional blessing.

The Kingdom of heaven is likened here unto a *human* king; which prepares us for certain points in it which we must not attribute to the divine. The king here will have a reckoning with his servants; and no sooner has he begun to reckon than there is brought to him one with an overwhelming debt, which argues in itself surely something more than any misfortune can account for. He is ordered, therefore, to be sold, with his wife and children and all belonging

talents.* But, forasmuch as he had [q] not wherewith to pay, his lord commanded him to be [r] sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore [s] fell down and worshiped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I [t] will pay thee all. But the lord of that servant, being moved with [u] compassion, loosed him and [v] forgave him the debt.

3 (28-30): The heart exposed.

3 But that servant went out and found one of his [w] fellow-servants, who owed him a [x] hundred pence†; and he laid hold of him and took him by the throat, saying, Pay what thou owest. Then his fellow-servant fell down and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee. But he [y] would not, but went off and cast him into prison till he should pay that which was due.

4 (31-35): The failure of mercy, for him with whom mercy fails.

4 Then his fellow-servants, when they saw what had

[q] *cf.* Ps.38.4. *cf.* Ps.130.3. *cf.* Rom. 3. 19, 20.
[r] *cf.* ch.5.25. *cf.* 2 Ki.4.1.
[s] *cf.* ver. 29. *cf.*ch.15.25.
[t] *cf.* Lk. 15. 19. *cf.*Ezek.18. 21.
[u] *cf.* Lk. 10. 33.
[v] *cf.* Acts 2. 38.
[w] *cf.* ch. 24. 49. Prov. 28. 3.
[x] *cf.* ch. 7. 3.
[y] *ctr.* Col. 3. 13. *ctr.* Eph.4. 32.

* Probably, about £2,400,000 sterling, or $12,000,000.
† Literally, "denarii," for which we have no equivalent coin. The denarius was worth about 8½ pence, or 17 cents.

to him, for the debt. We see in this the "human" king, of course; yet there is this truth in it, that the sinner against God, as far as he can do it, wrecks not himself alone, but all connected with him. No man can be his own enemy only, as men sometimes assert; and we need no argument to prove how the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children in this world, although in the final account every one answers simply for his own.

So helplessly are we all indebted to the supreme King. Good it is that there is mercy with Him for which all figures fail. The debtor falls at his lord's feet with an impossible plea for mercy in his own case,—how impossible in our own! "I will pay thee all." The king can accept no such agreement, takes no notice of it; but his heart is moved with compassion, and taking counsel of that, "he loosed him, and forgave him the debt."

3 All this, thank God, the blessed Speaker has now made very plain to us; but the point of the parable has yet to come. "But that servant went out"—out from an experience like this!—"and found one of his fellow-servants, who owed him a hundred pence"—denarii (about a 700,000th part of his own debt just forgiven); "and he laid hold of him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me what thou owest."

It was his own that he was demanding. Apart from the violence used, he was, as men say, quite within his rights. That was not the question; and every one at once understands that that was not the question. We too, in the exaction of our own from others, may be within our rights; and why is it that in our own case we are not as simple in judging of the real state of things as we are in the case of the man before us? We have been forgiven (if we are Christians) as well as he; and with regard to a debt in proportion to which his was as nothing. How is it that we can look upon grace or mercy shown to others as if it were anything more than the merest *righteousness* on our part, from the standpoint of forgiven men?

There follows an appeal, so like his own recent one, save only in its greater reasonableness and simplicity, that it should have pierced the heart of the hardened man: "Then his fellow-servant fell down and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee. But he would not, but went off and cast him into prison till he should pay the debt." It is the grace shown him that fully exposes the obduracy of his unmerciful heart.

4 Plain as the matter seems, it is developed and enforced upon us. The grief

come to pass, were grieved exceedingly, and went and related to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord called him to him, and saith to him, Thou wicked servant, [z] I forgave thee all that debt because thou besoughtest me: shouldest not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow-servant, even as I had mercy on thee?

z *cf.* Lk.7.41–43. *cf.* ch. 5. 7.

And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the [a] tormentors till he should pay all that was due. So also shall my heavenly father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother, from your [b] hearts.

a *cf.* ch.5.25, 26. *cf.*ch.25.41, 46.
b *cf.*ch.6.12–15. Mk. 11. 25, 26.

SECTION 5. (Chap. xix. 1–15.)

Nature and the Kingdom of God.

19 (1–12): The Creator's ordinance governing still.
19 (1–6): "one flesh" as at the beginning.

1. [1] And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these words, he [c] withdrew from Galilee and came into the borders of Judæa beyond Jordan. And great multitudes followed him, and he [d] healed them there.

c Mk. 10. 1. Jno. 10. 40.
d ch. 12. 15. *cf.*Mk.7.24, 25.

And the Pharisees came to him, [e] tempting him, and saying, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

e ch. 22. 15. Mk. 10. 2–12.

of his fellow-servants who bring the account of it to their lord; who on his part summons the guilty man and puts before him the wickedness of his conduct with abhorrence. The close of the parable has the moral of it, that mercy fails for him with whom it fails: "his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors till he should pay all that was due"—an impossible thing, and typical therefore of an eternal recompense.

A tremendous failure, when divine mercy fails to impress its image on the soul that has been subjected to its influence! Love that subdues not saves not, and this is, of course, the history of an unsaved soul. But the lesson that is to be learned is not to be limited by this, as the Lord's application of it shows. His government is over sinner and saint alike; and He is the same with sinner and saint in His unchanging reprobation of sin. Communion can only be in the holiness and love of the divine nature; and through all degrees of resemblance to that which has been before us, the principle applies. "So also shall My heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother, from your hearts."

Sec. 5.

In the fifth section the Lord shows to His disciples the relation of the Kingdom to what God as the Creator had established for the blessing of man: an important matter, as to which, it is evident, there would be need of instruction, as also the history of the professing Church has made manifest how easily the mind can get astray. Here was One who had declared Himself Lord of the sabbath, and revoked with His emphatic, "But *I* say unto you" the sayings of ancient days. It might naturally be questioned, how the new relationships which He had proclaimed would affect those of nature. He had bidden one whom He had called to "leave the dead to bury their dead," as called into a new sphere and power of life. It was necessary to show whether and how far nature was to have a place in the Kingdom of God; and the two questions of marriage and of children are such as would throw light upon this.

In the epistles, and with the advance of knowledge as to Christian place and privilege, such things had to be expanded and given practical application also; and it is significant that it is in those two of Paul's epistles in which the position of the believer is shown at its highest (Ephesians and Colossians) in which the duties arising from natural relationships are insisted on in the fullest way.

1. [1] Here it is the Pharisees who bring up the question of marriage, or of its

But he answered and said, Have ye not read that he who made them *f* from the beginning made [them] male and female, and said, On account of this, a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh? So then they are no longer two, but one flesh. *g* What, therefore, God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.

2 (7-9): Moses and divorce: does the law contradict?

f Gen. 1.27. Gen. 2. 24.

g *cf.* Eph. 5. 25-33. Heb. 13. 4.

[2] They say unto him, Why, then, did *h* Moses command to give a writ of divorce, and to put [her] away? He saith unto them, Moses for the *i* hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you that

h Deut. 24. 1. ch. 5. 31.

i *cf.* Rom. 8. 3. *cf.* Heb. 7. 18, 19.

obligation, in order, as it has been reasonably conjectured, to seek to involve Him in the disputes between the rabbinical schools of Hillel and Shammai, who were at issue as to divorce. The question, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for *every cause?*" seems indeed to refer to the opinions of the former, who went as far as to decide that a wife spoiling her husband's dinner was cause enough. But in answer the Lord goes further than Shammai himself, and removing all that man had in the meantime obscured it with, finds His argument in the institution of marriage at the beginning,—an argument which strikes at polygamy, as well as the loose holding of the marriage tie, and brings us beyond all that has come in with sin, to the first design of the Creator for His creatures.

He had made them male and female, each adapted for the other, each completed by the other; and had said as to what the union implied, "they two shall be one flesh." Two, and only two, are spoken of, as with Adam and his wife at first, where neither polygamy nor divorce could be thought of; and "one flesh" would make either polygamy or divorce abomination. Man's own voice, before sin had beclouded the mind, thus had given utterance to what the Lord speaks of as a divine utterance: for God and man were then at one. He who with true insight had before named the beasts and found among them all no helpmeet, spoke now in the joyful discernment of that helpmeet found.

[2] They have their objection from the law ready: "Why then did Moses command to give her a writing of divorcement and to put her away?" But they did not apprehend aright either Moses or themselves; and their argument is turned against them in the simplest manner: "Moses, for the *hardness of your hearts*, SUFFERED you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so." It was Moses himself who was furnishing the evidence, and what an evidence, of their own condition! The law, which was "weak through the flesh," could not perfect anything because of the resistance to it of a carnal people. That which they objected proved but at the same time their own evil and the hopelessness of it under law. And He turns upon them with one of those imperial sayings which put aside all power of resistance as with the lightning-flash of truth: "And I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife except for fornication, and shall marry another committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery."

One cause alone is permitted for divorce; and that where the bond of marriage has already been broken through. Where not so justified, another marriage on the side of husband or of wife is but adultery. Courts of law may legalize adultery of this sort, if they will, but they cannot sanctify it, or take away the brand which the Lord here puts upon it. How evident that the grace of Christianity is as far as possible from laxity!—that law is more tolerant here than grace can be. But the palliatives of law were only the proof that it could not heal; grace will not palliate, because it heals.

This, let us remember however, is the abstract right of the matter—binding of course, as such, with all the authority that the Lord's words can give it upon

[j] whosoever shall put away his wife, (except for fornication) and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery.

[3 (10-12): the special exception as to marriage.]

[3] The disciples say unto him, If the case of the man with his wife be so, it is not good to marry.

But he said unto them, Not [k] all have capacity for this, but those to whom it hath been given: for there are eunuchs who were born so from the mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men; and there are eunuchs who have made [l] themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is capable of it, let him go forward.

[j] ch. 5. 32. Lk. 16. 18. 1 Cor. 7.10, 11.

[k] 1 Cor. 7.7, 17. *cf.* 1 Tim. 5. 14.

[l] 1 Cor. 7.32-34, 37, 38. 1 Cor. 9. 5, 15.

every one of His own. He does not pursue it further, nor consider the complications that may arise in a world such as this which knows Him not, and where His people may be entangled with alliances with the unbelieving, or followed by the consequences of their conduct before conversion. This manifestly belongs rather to what concerns the discipline of the Church, and we shall find the principles applying to it in their place in the epistles. It will be the proper place, therefore, to consider them there, though for the help of souls a few words here may be in place.

We are all born in sin, and go astray naturally from the womb, except as the grace of God may prevent this. When converted to God we may have spent a large part of our lives in disobedience; the effects of which are not necessarily removed by our conversion. With the truest desire to do so, it may be absolutely impossible to return to the position in which we were before the sin was committed. Thus the Lord has Himself decided in the case of a divorced wife, after marriage to another, even though death has dissolved the newer relationship. For the former husband then to take her back again is declared to be an "abomination" to Him (Deut. xxiv. 4); and no change of dispensation can affect what is clearly grounded in nature itself, as an ordinance of the God of nature. Hence restoration to a past state may be, and will commonly be, where divorce has taken place, a thing impracticable. We have but to accept things as they are, and rejoice in the mercy that has blotted out the past, and enables us to start afresh, with Him.

Again, there are cases in which *separation* may be a necessity or allowable, where divorce could not be according to God; separation leaving yet room for the mercy of God to come in and restore; and this door the apostle opens in Corinthians (1 Cor. vii. 15), not too widely. Divorce he does not touch: for the Lord has decided there.

[3] To return now to our text: the disciples show out now the state of their own hearts. "If the case of the man with his wife be so," they say, "it is not good to marry." And the Lord replies: "Not all have capacity for this,* but those to whom it has been given." The word of God having pronounced from the beginning, to which our Lord has been referring us, that "it is not good for man to be alone," we cannot expect that the gift to abide alone will be other than exceptional. Christianity leaves the general truth unaffected, while it may and does give power over nature where special circumstances call for this.

*"This of which ye speak,"—λόγος being here used for the "*matter* of speech." The common translation here and in ver. 12 does not seem to me to give the sense: for what *saying* is it that all men are "not able to receive"? Certainly the Lord does not mean to agree with what they have said, that "it is not good to marry," and as certainly does not mean to apologize for the non-reception of what He has just so emphatically stated. The single state is, of course, what all have not the gift for. Χωρέω means both to "*have* room," and to "*make* room for;" and to "make room for *oneself*," so "to advance, go forward."

2 (13-15): The relation of children to the Kingdom.

2. Then were brought unto him [m]little children, that he might put his hands on them and pray; and the disciples [n]rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of [o]such is the kingdom of heaven. And he put his hands on them, and departed thence.

[m] Mk. 10.13-16. Lk. 18. 15-17.
[n] *cf.* ch. 15. 23.
[o] ch. 18. 3. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 2.

Nature itself has imposed this necessity upon some: the cruelty of men has imposed it upon others. But the Kingdom of heaven, as a motive in the heart, may lift men above all necessity, and enable them to take this place freely. How different a thought, however, from the selfishness which had just spoken out in the disciples, and of which their Master takes no further notice. The shining of the light sufficiently reveals the darkness which it displaces.

2. We pass on to a different scene, and a far happier one, though still to find the painful contrast between the Master and the disciples. It is in this case so much the more so, as He has already declared the spirit of His Kingdom by the example of one of these little children who are now brought to Him, that He may "put His hands on them and pray." But they seem full of nothing but of His dignity as a Rabbi, in which they found also, without doubt, their own. Of what use to bring such mere babes to Him? But the Lord answers their rebuke Himself by bidding them place Him higher in their thoughts, and recognize what the parents here more truly apprehended in Him,—the power which had all within its absolute control, the love which wielded this power. To put His hands on them and pray: would this be barren? In the Kingdom of God in Israel had there been no place for babes? And now that heaven was manifesting itself, and the Father's name being declared, in the Kingdom of *heaven* was there to be no place for babes? Yes; emphatically yes: for "of such" it was, and of no others. If men had to become like babes to enter it, the spirit of the babe was the very spirit of the Kingdom; and who should shut them out? "Suffer the little children," He says, "to come unto Me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of heaven. And He laid His hands on them, and departed thence."

It is to be observed, however, that Matthew excludes, what Mark and Luke both record, the Lord's words as to moral resemblance. The latter is not here the point, but the place with Him of little children *themselves*, the answer to the heart's affections, given of God Himself, to those who are manifestly put in their weakness and need, to be nurtured, trained, reared amid the contrary influences of the world, to be for the glory of Him whose they are, while in it. How gracious and comforting is the assurance then, that we may come in the confession of our weakness to Him who is Lord of all, though yet the world does not own Him, and in faith still put our little ones into His hand, assured of His reception of them, and that He recognizes them, not as part of the outside world, but as subjects of His Kingdom and disciples in His school. Here is our warrant and encouragement to "bring them up in the discipline and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. vi. 4), expecting from Him the grace of the Spirit, which alone can make it effectual. For the word abides for us, if we do not through our unbelief make it barren, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts xvi. 31).

The Kingdom of heaven was not yet come: it is only at the end of this Gospel and after His resurrection that we find the Lord announcing all authority as given to Him in heaven and on earth (xviii. 18). The words are, therefore, anticipative of that time, and perpetuate the value for us of His action here.

Sec. 6.

The sixth section shows us man in his creature place, limited necessarily because of this, but still more as fallen and in his sins; but it shows us also how God, who alone can, overcomes for him the straitness of his condition, and brings him out (as the psalmist says) into a large place.

SECTION 6. (Chap. xix. 16—xx. 16.)
Human limitation, and how overcome.

1 (xix. 16-22): Eternal life, and God alone good.

1. And behold, one [p] came to him and said, Teacher, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? But he said unto him, Why askest thou me about that which is good? There is One good: but if thou desirest to enter into life, [q] keep the commandments.

[p] Mk.10.17-22. Lk. 18. 18-23.

[q] Lk. 10.25-28. Lev. 18. 5.

This is developed in two ways, which are in beautiful connection, while yet very different: as regards the salvation of the sinner, and as regards the reward of a saint. For rewards there are, in which divine love sovereignly displays itself, for they are "mercy" (2 Tim. i. 18) and not a claim of right; as the Lord has emphatically taught us to say, when we have done all, we are unprofitable servants: we have done but that which it was our duty to do.

Creature merit is thus impossible,—a doctrine which destroys at once not only the supererogatory works and merits of the saints as Rome teaches them, but very much else held quite outside of Rome; while it makes eternal life for the sinner (such as we all are) only possible to grace.

But, alas! we are as naturally self-righteous, as we are absolutely without the least true claim to righteousness. If we will look around, we may quite easily find the Pharisee in the felon's coat; and nearer still, in our own hearts, the spirit of Pharisaism ready to spring out from under the shadow of the Cross itself, its God-ordained condemnation.

Here we have the beginning and the end of it, as we may say, the self-assertion of the sinner and of the saint; and in the last case creeping, if it might be, into heaven itself in the abuse of the truth as to rewards. In the glimpse of heaven which immediately follows we shall have at last a scene from which it will be perfectly and forever banished. The victory of divine grace over us will then be fully accomplished.

1. We begin here with a question addressed to the Lord, not, as so often, by one tempting or caviling, but, on the contrary, earnestly seeking the way of life: "Teacher, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?"

It is "*what* good thing:" he does not doubt at all that *some* good thing is what is needed. Too many are on that road to allow him to doubt its being the right one. At the same time he is conscious of a lack,—not self-satisfied, and yet, as we see directly, with no conviction of sin, no thought of inability to attain his goal, if only the means were pointed out to him. Yet there were many instructors on such points whom he must, with the anxiety that he has, have sought out, but had not gained satisfaction from them. He confesses himself ignorant of the way of life, and has confidence, as it seems, that Christ can teach him. All this is encouraging, and yet he is on the broad way still with the multitude (no sign for good, that) and expecting God to give eternal life to the doer of "some good thing."

The Lord meets him, therefore, where he is: not, as we might have expected, perhaps, with the gospel and the declaration of His grace, for he has as yet no need of grace. Law must do its work with him, for "by the law is the knowledge of sin." Yet He does, at the same time, intimate the result, and so had the law itself done with its unrent veil, God in the darkness,—whether men realized it or not: witness and warning on God's part can never be wanting, and so here: "Why askest thou Me about that which is good? there is One good," and only One.

That blocks the way for the legalist entirely; which yet in a sense the Lord opens directly, that one who must learn by experience may do so: "but if thou desirest to enter into life, keep the commandments."

There was nothing fresh to be pointed out as to such a path. The law had long since precisely defined every thing, and not left men to search for some good thing additional or other than this. It is true they had not found life in

He saith unto him, Which? And Jesus said, [r] Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother, and Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

The young man saith unto him, All these have I [s] kept; what [t] lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wouldst be perfect, go, [u] sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have [v] treasure in heaven; and come, [w] follow me.

But when the young man heard that word, he went away [x] grieved, for he was one who had great possessions.

2. And Jesus said unto his disciples, Verily, I say unto you that a [y] rich man shall with difficulty enter into the

2 (xix.23-26): Impossible to man, but possible to God—salvation.

r Ex. 20. 13 etc. *cf.* 1 Jno.4. 20, 21.
s *cf.* Phil. 3. 6, 7.
t *cf.* Jas.2.10, 11.
u Lk. 12. 33. *cf.* I Cor.13. 3.
v ch. 6. 20. *cf.* I.k.16.9. *cf.* Acts 2. 45.
w *cf.* ch.8.19 -22.
x *ctr.* Heb. 10. 34. *cf.* Rom. 8. 3, 4.
y Mk.10.23-27. Lk. 18. 24-27; Prov. 11. 28; *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 26-29.

this way, and hence resulted the uneasiness that prompted such inquiries as that of the young man now. But the law had nevertheless precisely defined all the good required: "the man that doeth these things shall live in them." True, "that which was" thus the way "to life, I found to be to death," says the apostle; and so will all true experience find it, a "ministration of death" (2 Cor. iii. 7),—the very thing man needs to shut him up to the grace of God in Christ.

But the young man has not received this ministration of death: he had no "sentence of death in himself, that he should not trust in himself, but God that raiseth the dead." He was unsatisfied; the light of God was not on his path, —that he knew. There was no burden of sin to be lifted. He lacked, but confessedly knew not what he lacked. How many are in just such a condition! rich, and comfortably able to thank God for that; ignorant of such trials as even a Job had to learn before the depths of his heart could be made known to him, but, like him, not at rest. As to "commandments," which did the Master mean? The Lord tests him by the second table of the law, the human side, summing it all up in "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." But he is with Saul of Tarsus, "touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless." There is no shadow upon the honest face with which he turns to Him he is questioning, with the assertion, "All these have I kept; what lack I yet?" And then the bolt falls for him out of a summer sky: "If thou wouldst be perfect, sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

People ask, how could the Lord make that the condition of eternal life for him? But it was the law that had made that necessary which would have made this easy—that he should love his neighbor as himself: and this he had declared he actually did. *Why not*, then, sell what he had, and give to the poor? Would it be more to him than giving it back to himself, to give to the neighbor whom he loved as himself?

Evidently the Lord is but searching out a heart that sorely needed it. He does not make it a condition of eternal life; for that is a gift which He Himself had come to acquire for us; but He speaks to the young man according to the character which he professed; adding to it that tender assurance of a heart open to him, which was ready to give him a place among His followers and intimates. "Jesus, beholding him, loved him," says Mark in connection with these very words. And this love, may we not hope, might, even spite of present failure, wake up to consciousness of its condition the heart that could now, alas! turn from it, though grieved, to enjoy in its now exposed selfishness its "great possessions."

2. But of this we have no knowledge. The Lord makes use of this case now

kingdom of heaven; and again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

And when the disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? And Jesus looking upon them said, With men this is [z] impossible, but with God all things are possible.

3 (xix. 27–29): The portion in glory.

3. Then Peter answered and said unto him, Behold, *we* have [a] left all and followed thee: what shall we have then? And Jesus said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, in the [b] regeneration, when the Son of man shall [c] sit on the throne of

[z] Gen.18.14. *cf.* Lk.19.2–10.
[a] Mk.10.28–31. Lk. 18. 28–30. *cf.* Lk.5.10, 11.
[b] *cf.* Is.65.18–21.
[c] *cf.* ch.25.31.

to impress upon His disciples the difficulty, nay, the impossibility, of a rich man entering into the Kingdom of God. The camel may more easily pass through a needle's eye, He says; and we must leave these words in all their simplicity,—the thing completely passes nature. The camel is, no doubt, the suited figure of one burdened with his possessions, after the manner of the young man here. The things of the world thus claim and control the natural man; and how often is their influence seen upon one who is through grace a Christian! Only the almighty grace of God can change this, that is, can change the nature of man; and so, when in dismay the disciples ask, "Who then can be saved?" the Lord assures them, salvation is not of self, but of God.

3. The question of Peter cannot but suggest how readily in a saint also the spirit of self-seeking can intrude into the most sacred themes and places. The Lord's answer perfectly recognizes and provides for this, which comes out presently in a more offensive form in the other two of His most privileged disciples. But we may be thankful for that which exposes what is our own need as well as theirs, and has been the occasion of such an answer to it as we find here.

"Peter answered and said unto Him, Behold, we have left all and followed Thee: what shall we have then? And Jesus said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, that ye who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." This is found only in Luke and in this Gospel, and in perfect suitability with the character of it. It shows us how literally the reign of the saints with Christ is to be taken, and in the term "regeneration" applied to the millennial Kingdom presents an instructive parallel between the work of God in the individual and in the world at large. That these are, in fact, in correspondence with one another, the first chapter of Genesis has already made us fully aware (*see notes*). The only other place in which we find this word "regeneration" (παλιγγενεσία) is in the epistle to Titus (iii. 5) and it is there applied to the individual state: "according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." In the present state of the world sin not only dwells, but *reigns;* in the coming Kingdom sin exists but reigns no longer, as in the soul that has truly bowed to Christ; then comes the change of the heavens and earth, as for the saint the bodily change into His likeness; and so finally for each, sin neither reigns nor exists. Thus there is a complete parallel between the ways of God in grace with the individual and with the world at large, a unity which is the stamp of the perfect workmanship of the One God in every sphere of His working, whatever may be the variety also which testifies to His infinite resources.

The Lord goes on to assure us that His love can forget nothing of whatever any disciple of His may have renounced for His name. He shall receive a hundredfold and inherit everlasting life. These distinctive rewards, whatever may be the blessing in them, we must remember always to keep apart from what is the common portion of believers, which it is good to realize, as being simply the fruit of Christ's work for us, must be by far more blessed than anything which

his glory, ye also shall [d]sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And [e]every one who hath left houses or brethren or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for my name's sake shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.

4 (xix. 30–xx.16): But mercy only.
1 (xix. 30–xx. 2): the agreement.
2 (xx. 3-7): dependents upon mercy.

4. [1] But [f]many first shall be last, and last first. For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man, a householder, who went out with the [g]early morn to hire laborers for his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny* a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

[2] And he went out about the third hour, and saw [h]others standing idle in the market-place, and said unto

* a "denarius."

d *cf.* 2 Tim. 2. 12. *cf.* 1 Pet. 4. 13. *cf.*ch.20.21. *cf.*Lk.22.29.
e ch. 10. 37–39. *cf.*2 Cor.8.9.
f ch. 20. 16. ch.21.31,32. *cf.*1 Cor.15. 8.
g *cf.* Jer. 7. 13, 25.
h *cf.* Lk. 14. 21. *cf.*ch.21.43.

even in divine mercy can be accorded to our own. The place of children with God, of membership in the body of Christ,—these and such things as these are to us the fruit of divine grace alone, and have nothing whatever to do with reward of our work. This is so simple that there should be no need even of mentioning it; and yet many Christians confound, more or less, things so different as these; as even the "many mansions" of our Father's house have been taken to imply different degrees of reward, and to put the children of God at various degrees of distance from their Father,—the very thing which assuredly is most opposite to the Lord's intention of comfort in it. But, in fact, the legality of the human heart is such as to make the whole matter of reward require the most jealous guarding from abuse; and this the Lord proceeds now to supply in the parable which follows here.

4. The meaning of the parable is given both at the beginning and the close; so earnestly is it pressed upon us. We must not allow ourselves to be carried away from this by any supposed demand of special features, as to which we are cautioned here in the same way as in the case of the previous parable of the unmerciful servant (ch. xviii. 23). There it is "a *man*, a king"; here, "a man, a householder." In the application we are bidden to remember that we must distinguish between the ways of men and the ways of God, even where the one may be taken to illustrate the other. *God* certainly does not "hire" laborers after the manner of men, where work in His vineyard is in question; but this is human misunderstanding of His way. The prodigal still afar off may talk of the "hired servants" of his father's house; but we are not to take this as a representation of the actual truth. And the very design of the parable here is to warn us by the issue against such perversions. It would seem, therefore, plain that to seek to interpret everything in it as if it stood for absolute truth would be to fall in measure into the very misconceptions from which it is intended to deliver us.

[1] The agreement with the laborers illustrates but the legality of souls who so misconstrue the Lord's *gracious* recompense of what is done for Him. Just so far as this is made the end for which we labor, it is clear that the character of what is done is deteriorated, and its value to Him lost. We are living to ourselves, the misery from which divine grace has delivered those that are Christ's.

We are not, therefore, to conceive of this either, as if any child of God could be a mere hireling. The principle, given broadly in the parable, is by this means put before us in its proper repulsiveness, and the picture is an ideal one solely. Were we to take it as literally exact, we should have to imagine God giving in the day of recompense some stipulated measure of reward to those who have worked for it; which, whether it were saint or sinner, would be positive error. Recognizing it as ideal only, the lesson remains, and with no perplexity.

[2] In those who are called to labor at various hours in the day, we find the

them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is just I will give you. And they went [their] way. And again having gone out about the sixth and ninth hour, he did likewise. And he went out about the [i]eleventh hour, and saw others standing, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard.*

[i] *cf.* Lk. 23. 39–43.

3 (xx. 8-10): the realization.

3 Now, when [j]evening was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers, and pay them their hire, beginning from the last even unto the first. And when they came who [began] at the eleventh hour, they [k]received every one a penny. And when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they also received every one a penny.

[j] *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 10.

[k] *cf.* Rom. 4. 4, 5. *cf.* 1 Cor. 4. 7.

4 (xx. 11,12): murmuring.

4 And when they had received it, they [l]murmured against the master of the house, saying, These last have worked but one hour, and thou hast made them [m]equal unto us who have borne the burden of the day and the heat.

[l] *cf.* Rom. 14. 10, 11.

[m] *ctr.* Lk. 17. 7–10. *ctr.* 1 Cor. 16, 17.

5 (xx. 13-16): conditions of the result.

5 But he answered one of them and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take what is thine, and go thy way: I will

* Some old MSS. add, "and whatsoever is just ye shall receive."

thought of a stipulated agreement more and more given up, and those who go into the vineyard becoming correspondingly more dependent upon the goodness of the householder to give to them as he sees fit. To those called at the third hour it is simply said, "Whatsoever is just I will give you." At the sixth and ninth hours, "what is just" becomes a more and more slender hope. In the case of those at the eleventh hour, nothing seems to be said of this at all:* they are left entirely to the owner of the vineyard to give as he please, or not.

3 At the end of the day, the laborers are called and paid; and then those called at the eleventh hour receive a whole day's wages. Of those called at the intermediate hours we are told nothing, but it is implied that they all receive the same: for when the first come, expecting to receive more, they also are paid every one a penny. From this some have deduced the doctrine of an equality of reward for all; but that is not the doctrine of Scripture; and the rewards here are plainly according to the moral of the parable given to us, that the "first shall be last and the last first:" which again is not equality.

4 It is the first alone who murmur: it would be impossible for any of the rest, one would say, to do so; for they are all, in fact, overpaid. Ah, were we not, how little would we any of us receive! In the day of reward will there be a legalist found to murmur against the amount of his recompense? Surely, not one; all is again only ideal here. And yet even the first can only complain that they have not received *more* than they bargained for.

5 The answer of the householder to one of those that murmur brings before us the conditions which have determined that result of which they now so foolishly complain. They cannot say they have not received what they contracted for. They had got what was just; grace they had not trusted nor sought: how can they complain that to those who were dependent upon it it has been shown? —and indeed in the measure in which they were dependent.

* Though some ancient MSS. add a similar clause; but the oldest and the drift of the parable are against it.

give to this last even as to thee. Is it not lawful for me to do [n]what I will in mine own matters? is thine eye evil because I am good? So the [o]last shall be first, and the first last; [for many are the called, but few chosen.] *

n *cf.* Rom. 9. 20, 21.
o ch. 19. 30.

SECTION 7. (Chap. xx. 17–28.)

The perfection of the Kingdom.

1 (17-19): The will of the Master.

1. And Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart, and said to them on the way, [p]Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man will be delivered up to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death, and deliver him up to the Gentiles, to mock and scourge and crucify [him]; and the third day he shall rise again.

p Mk. 10.32-34. Lk. 18.31-34. ch. 16. 21.

* Some omit.

For them it was a matter of bounty, not of right; for the giver of it, had he not the right to be bountiful? What I am entitled to must be measured by what I am; what grace shall give can only be measured by what God is. Human measure and divine! put it at the best you can for man, what a difference here!

The more we think of our service, the less must we think of Him to whom the service is done; the more we imagine claim, the less must His grace appear: that the first should thus be last is absolutely simple. Think of it as the Lord once put it, a supper at which the guests take their places as they estimate themselves. No one here, however, says to another, "Give this man place." They are permitted to assign to themselves just the rank they claim. Only, when the King comes in to take His own place among the guests, He takes it at the *opposite* end of the table from that which they imagined! Then, of course, "the first is last and the last is first;" and yet their places are decided by their own self-measurement.

"For many are the called," says the Lord in closing, "but few the chosen ones:" words which here tell us that among the guests few are they that are according to His mind indeed. Alas! how slow we are indeed in the true judgment of self! how difficult is it for divine grace to obtain full possession of us!

Sec. 7.

The seventh section, in close connection with the last, gives us a gleam of the glory of the Kingdom which displays its moral perfection, in contrast with all the kingdoms of men. The spirit of the disciples also is shown out in contrast with the spirit of their Lord, and their painful misconception of all that constitutes true glory. But it is upon the Lord Himself that the eye rests here, who is the Light and Glory, as of the heavenly City so of the earth in the blessing that it soon shall know. And with this, suitably, this fourth division of the Gospel closes.

1. We have first the Lord going up to Jerusalem, with the perfect consciousness of all that is before Him there. He takes the twelve apart in order to make known to them again what He would have them realize as to Him—no unforeseen thing, but that for which He had come, and to which He had devoted Himself. He knew every bitter ingredient in that cup which He was going to drink: the betrayal, the condemnation by the heads of the people—His own, their delivering Him to the Gentiles, the mockery, the scourging, the crucifixion. Of all this He speaks to them, adding the blessed comfort of His resurrecion also, on the third day. Mark tells us of the fear that had already fallen upon them in the way; Luke, that nevertheless they understood none of these things, but that this saying was hidden from them. No doubt, all this went together. They

2 (20-23): The lust of the disciple.

2. Then came to him the [q]mother of Zebedee's sons with her sons, worshiping him, and asking something of him. And he said unto her, What wouldst thou? She saith unto him, Say that these my [r]two sons may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answering said, Ye [s]know not what ye ask. Can ye drink the [t]cup which I am about to drink? They say to him, We can. He saith unto them, My cup ye shall drink indeed; but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, except to those for whom it has been [u]prepared of my Father.

3 (24-28): The actuality of glory.

3. And when the ten heard it, they were [v]indignant about the two brethren. But Jesus called them to him and said, Ye know that the rulers of the nations lord it over them, and the great exercise authority over them.

q Mk.10.35-45.
r ch. 19. 28. *ctr.* Rev.4. 10.
s *cf.* Lk.9.46-56.
t *cf.* ch.26.37-39, 42. *cf.* Jno. 18. 11.
u *cf.* Rev.3. 21.
v *cf.* Lk. 22. 24-30.

were dazed and stupefied with the apprehension of a great sorrow which they had no courage to face nor take in. Matthew simply speaks of the Lord's making it known to them, putting this in sharpest contrast with the appeal of the sons of Zebedee with their mother which follows next, and which shows so perfectly in which direction they were looking at that time,—how quickly they had rallied from the unwelcome announcement of the Cross, to comfort themselves with that which, true as it was, they were soon to show they little apprehended. The glory itself they would find morally conditioned by that Cross of which it was the outcome, and from which they turned away.

2. After the will of the Master, therefore,—a will in which self-seeking had no place,—we come to the lust of the disciple, to see how the most precious truths can be distorted by the mirror that reflects them, were it a James and a John, the nearest intimates of the Lord on earth, who furnish the mirror. How jealous should we be of ourselves, lest we should pervert what we imagine we but receive, and turn our blessing into loss and shame!

Nature is leading here, as is evident; the mother of Zebedee's sons is a witness to us of how our natural relationships need to be watched and not suffered to intrude into the things of God. We see in the Lord's case how He refuses all control of this kind, as we see in the Popish doctrine how readily, if allowed, it will come in. "Say that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, the other on Thy left hand, in Thy kingdom."

But the way of the Cross from which they have turned is the way of glory: "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of?" The moment it presents itself to them as a personal gain, they are ready. The Lord answers, "Ye shall indeed drink of My cup; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, except to those for whom it is prepared of My Father."

He is the perfect Servant all the way through; just because—

"Serving in the joy of love."

In exaltation and in lowest humiliation, the Father's will rules for Him—is all to Him. We have the wonderful example, in One perfect in wisdom and in goodness, of how service is the characteristic sign of love. In Him in whom all is absolute freedom, there is never a thought of anything but the Father's will. To us, what a commendation of it! What a bond of perfection for the universe will it be in all eternity, the Son of God in manhood, Himself "subject to Him who put all things under Him"!

3. But the indignation of the ten at the two brethren shows their kinship with them morally. And now the Lord lets them see their common error, and the true glory of that Kingdom which they had been thinking of as if it were but like a kingdom of the nations. What! did they imagine that in *His* Kingdom

So it shall [w]not be among you; but whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you shall be your bond-servant: even as the [x]Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a [y]ransom for many.

[w] 1 Pet. 5.3. cf. Ezek.34. 21. cf. Eph.3.8. [x] Phil. 2. 7. [y] Is.53.10,11. cf. 1 Tim.2. 6. cf. Tit.2.14.

there would be the gratification of ambition, of the desire for lordship? or that the places of rule with Him could be such as this would imply? No: for service was the road to rule, and this could only be because rule itself would be but more ample service. Whosoever would be great among them would be their minister, and the chief among them by that very fact be but bound to serve them. Must it not be plain that the Son of man, the King, "came not to be ministered unto but to minister"? Glory might change the character of this service—not the spirit nor the fact of it. The Cross might be lowest humiliation for Him, but it was His glory too. Could they cease to remember it? Could the love shown there be measured by aught else? Could it change or be exhausted? Would He be upon the Throne to be ministered unto or to minister? What must the places of rule be in the Kingdom of which He would be the King!

DIV. 5.

Clear as it already was that Christ would not be received by His own, there yet had to be His formal presentation to Jerusalem as its King, so that they might openly and manifestly accept or reject Him. Moreover, this could not be too early, before not only His works of power had been done among them, but also He Himself had been fully before their eyes, and His teaching was sufficiently known to those who cared even to listen to it. For these were in fact the credentials of His power, as from God. The people as a whole would have responded to what had been the devil's suggestion, and have welcomed one who had cast himself down unhurt from the pinnacle of the temple before their eyes. But that could have been no settlement of anything in any way acceptable to God. The people who did, in fact, believe when they saw the miracles that He did, He could not trust. God is not Power only, nor Power and Wisdom, but Righteousness and Holiness and Love as well. All was fully now displayed, and they were called to make their momentous decision.

Now therefore He openly accepts the title of the Son of David given Him by the acclamation of the multitudes who accompany Him to the city, and who had perhaps been first wrought upon by the miracle at Jericho, which was expressly an acceptance of that title. The blind men to whom He had given sight were with Him as His witnesses, as once before two blind men (chap. ix. 27) had been; but then forbidden to let any know it. Here all is in public, and they follow Him without prohibition. His claim of the asses afterwards, expressly as fulfilling Zechariah's prophecy, is still more outspoken; and the children crying in the temple are commended by Him in the fullest way.

But the acclamations die out in the air of the rebellious city, whose pollution of the temple proclaimed its rottenness at heart; and His judgment of the fig-tree is that of the people themselves, of whom the "fig-tree planted in a vineyard" is elsewhere distinctly used by Him as the figure (Luke xiii. 6, 7). This is the prelude only to that open opposition which follows on the part of all the various sects and classes among them, who set aside their strife with one another to unite in vainly seeking to ensnare Whom they cannot confute. And this ends with the "woe" upon the leaders, and His lament over the city.

SUBD. 1.

The presentation of the King occupies the first subdivision here, which ends with the judgment of the fig-tree. All is quickly over, for the decision of the people has been really made before, and here they but re-affirm it. Babes and

DIVISION 5. (Chaps. xx. 29–xxiii.)

The Governmental Presentation and the End as to Israel.

SUBDIVISION 1. (Chaps. xx. 29–xxi. 22.)

The King.

1 (xx. 29-34): The gift of light.

1. AND as they [z] went out from Jericho, a great multitude followed him. And behold, [a] two blind men sitting by the way-side, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, Lord, have mercy on us, [thou] Son of David.

And the multitude [b] rebuked them, that they should hold their peace; but they cried out the more, Lord, have mercy on us, [thou] Son of David.

And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What [c] would ye that I should do for you? They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. And Jesus had [d] compassion on them and touched their eyes, and immediately they received sight and followed him.

2 (xxi. 1-11): The announcement.

2. And when they drew [e] nigh to Jerusalem, and had come to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, Go into the village over against you, and immediately ye will find an ass tied and a colt with her: loose them and bring them to me. And if any one say aught unto you, ye shall say, the Lord hath [f] need of them; and he will send them immediately.

[z] Mk.10.46-52. Lk. 18. 35-43.
[a] *cf.*ch.8.28. *cf.* ch. 9. 27 with 2 Cor. 13. 1.
[b] *cf.* ch. 19. 13.
[c] *cf.* ch. 15. 28.
[d] Mk. 1. 41. *cf.* Heb. 4. 15.
[e] Mk. 11. 1-11. Lk. 19. 29-40. John 12. 12-19.
[f] *cf.* Ps. 50. 10.

sucklings may welcome Him, but the people are far from being of the spirit of such, and therefore far from the Kingdom. The cry "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord" will have, as the Lord declares, to be taken up again and in earnest at a future time.

1. The royal proclamation begins at Jericho, the city of the curse; which does not and cannot, however, prevail over the blessing. Jericho, which even in Joshua's day had witnessed the salvation of Rahab from its own doom, now witnesses the grace of the Son of David. Two blind men, sitting by the wayside, cry out to Him as this, only to find the rebuke of the multitude, as by and by a remnant of Israel will awake up to their darkness and their need of Him, only to meet the opposition of a growingly apostate mass. But they cry the more, until He who can never turn away from the voice of need answers and heals them. The light dawns upon those sightless eyes, and the Person of their Saviour becomes revealed to them; then they follow Him.

The two men in this case, where in the other synoptics is but one, are, as we have seen, characteristic of Matthew, as the two blind men before (chap. ix.) and the two demoniacs (chap. viii), in both which cases Mark and Luke speak but of one. There is surely, therefore, design in this difference, which in Matthew, no doubt, speaks of witness-bearing to the Lord, now in the character which at this time He is taking. And this witness He does not, as in the former case, forbid; as the healing also is now in public. Publicity He designs, as His time is at last come for "showing Himself to the world;" and these, delivered from the "land of darkness and of the shadow of death" are suited witnesses.

2. Accordingly now upon His approach to Jerusalem, at Bethphage, the "house of unripe figs,"—and the typical significance of the fig comes shortly into prominence,—He sends two of His disciples to claim for His service the ass and colt, upon the latter of which He rides into the city. The animal was characteristic of the Prince of peace, in contrast with the war-horse upon which we

Now this was done that it might be [g] fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Say unto the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and mounted upon an ass, yea, upon a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.

And the disciples went and did as Jesus had commanded them, and brought the ass and the colt, and put their garments upon them; and he sat upon them. And a very great multitude spread their own garments in the way, and others cut branches from the trees and strewed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before him and that followed cried, saying, [h] Hosanna to the Son of David: [i] blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest.

And when he entered into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitudes said, This is Jesus the [j] prophet, from Nazareth of Galilee.

3 (xxi. 12–17): The cleansing of the temple.

3. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and [k] cast out all the sellers and buyers in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of those that sold doves. And he saith unto them, It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer; but *ye* have made it a robbers' den.

[g] Zech. 9. 9. Is. 62. 11.

[h] Ps. 118. 25.

[i] Ps. 118. 26. *cf* ch. 23. 39.

[j] Lk. 7. 16. *cf.* ch. 16. 14.

[k] Lk. 19. 45, 46. Mk. 11. 15–17. *cf.* John 2. 13–17. *cf* Mal. 3. 2, 3.

see Him in Revelation (xix. 11). The young animal also, before unridden, shows the new and free spirit of obedience which alone could bring Him into His place among His people—thus to be "willing in the day of His power" (Ps. cx. 3).

As to the other ass accompanying, it is impossible not to think of the past in connection with it, as the patristic commentators did. Is it more suitable to regard it merely as necessary to quiet the foal for its service to its Creator? Those who can think so we must leave to such sober interpretation. It was a time when the very stones were ready to cry out, and all, we may be sure, has its significance for us. The "foal of a beast of burden" seems even as if it were intended to remind us, not surely of the unbelieving synagogue, nor yet of the law itself, which imposed, but did not *bear*, burdens, but rather of those who as belonging to the legal dispensation could be so pictured, even though the true people of God by faith. Thus only, as inheritors of that faith, could the after-generation, destined to freer service, be counted as their offspring. But with these the elder generations could be seen, as linked with them in the triumph of the Christ now come.

Thus all is surely consistent, though even for that time it was but a gleam of light which, as far as Israel nationally was concerned, went out in darkness. And the prophecy of Zechariah is carefully abridged on this account. "He is just and having salvation" is omitted, because in fact salvation could not then come. The crowds might exhibit a temporary enthusiam, and genuine disciples add their truer homage to the King,—the city meets it with a question merely, however "moved;" and the "Hosannas to the Son of David" weaken sadly into the how different reply, "This is Jesus the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee." The King of glory is for them already discrowned.

3. But He, not dependent on the voices of the multitude, goes on into the temple which was in fact the place of His throne, but now desecrated by the abominations of priestly avarice, for which the people, three years before the destruction of the city, themselves suppressed the traffic that defiled

And [l]blind and lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.

But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonders which he wrought, and the children crying in the temple and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David, they were [m]indignant, and said to him, Hearest thou what these say? But Jesus saith unto them, Yea; did ye never read, [n]Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise? And he [o]left them, and went out of the city to Bethany, and he passed the night there.

4 (xxi. 18–22): Failure under test.

4. Now early in the morning, as he returned to the city, he [p]hungered. And seeing one [q]fig-tree by the wayside, he came to it; and he found nothing thereon but [r]leaves only. And he saith to it, Let no fruit be henceforth on thee for ever. And forthwith the fig-tree [s]withered away.

l cf. Acts 3. 1, 2 etc. *cf.* Lk. 14. 21.

m cf. ch. 20. 31. *cf.* John 11. 47, 48. *cf.* John 12. 19.

n Ps. 8. 2.

o cf. Jno. 11. 54.

p cf. Jno. 4. 6. Mk. 11. 12–14, 20–23.

q cf. Lk. 13. 6–9.

r cf. Gen. 3. 7 with Is. 64. 6.

s cf. 1 Sam. 2. 5. *cf.* Is. 5. 5–7.

it.* There it was before His eyes, with its loud-voiced iniquity, just as He had met it at the beginning of His ministry, and then purged out the defilement as He afresh purges it now. Quick work for Him to establish His authority there in the very presence of His fiercest enemies, in the heart of Jerusalem, in His Father's house itself, which, as He tells them, they had changed from the "house of prayer" for which it should have been known, into a robber's den. And there, in the now empty place, "the blind and the lame" (characteristic and concurrent types of those that needed the touch of the true King) "came to Him in the temple and He healed them." Thus He is owned of God and of man alike,—though of man, alas, unchanged and hostile still. There are no "willing people;" and for them it cannot be the "day of His power." He may prove His title, but cannot take His throne.

This is for Him, then, no triumph: only the children's voices make music for Him now, with whom the hosannas that have died out in the streets are taken up again. What is hidden from wise and prudent is revealed to babes; and the rebuke which they look for from Him as to it, they find themselves. No: they had never read that "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings He perfected praise." How much of our Bibles, it may be, *we* have never read, though our eyes may have often enough been upon what they have never seen there! Had they been spiritually little ones, would they not have seen this? Even our involuntary ignorance may tell—*must* tell—thus against us!

They were not little ones, and therefore for that generation of Israel the Kingdom could not come. The Lord withdraws from the city to spend the night at Bethany among those whose hearts had answered to the grace that was seeking men.

4. In the morning He returns early to the city, and is ahungered. A fig-tree is before Him by the wayside, and He comes to it to satisfy His hunger, but finds no fruit. Mark tells us that it was not the season yet for figs; but the leaves upon this tree promised for it fruit, as Israel stood alone among the nations in the profession of allegiance to the One True God. Fruit therefore could be expected from her, if nowhere else; and He with hunger of soul unsatisfied had been seeking it. His own parable of the fig-tree had been long before spoken (Luke xiii. 6–9) with evident application to the people also; and now the judgment is to be pronounced. "Let no fruit be henceforth on thee for ever," is answered by the rapid withering away of the fruitless tree.

The disciples are in amazement when they see the fig-tree withered; but the

* Edersheim, vol. i., p. 372.

And when the disciples saw it, they wondered, saying, How suddenly is the fig-tree withered away! But Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have [t]faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do what is done unto the fig-tree, but if ye shall say to this mountain, Be thou removed and cast into the sea, it shall come to pass. And [u]all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

[t] ch. 17. 20. Lk. 17. 6. *cf.* 1 Cor. 13. 2.

[u] ch. 7. 7–11. John 15. 7. Jas. 5. 16–18.

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chap. xxi. 23–46.)

Rejection and its Consequences.

1 (23-27): The question of authority.

1. AND when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and elders of the people came to him while he was teaching, saying, By what [v]authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

[v] Mk. 11. 27–33. Lk. 20. 1–8.

Lord uses the miracle to assure them of the power which was ready to manifest itself for them in response to faith. Not only should they do what was done to the fig-tree, but if they had faith and doubted not, even a mountain standing in their way should be removed and cast into the sea, and whatsoever they asked in prayer, believing, would be done. We may well see in this a veiled assurance of how Israel, now nothing but an obstacle in the path of faith would disappear politically in the sea of the nations. But the promise here is of course, of very various application, and it would be entirely wrong in any way to limit it, save as the Lord Himself does; who distinctly makes His last assurance as full as possible. To faith nothing shall be denied; but it is not limitation to insist that faith must be faith.

SUBD. 2.

The opposition gathers strength, although still kept in check by the power displayed in Him, and by the revealing words in which He lays bare the condition of things and their hypocrisy and unfrankness in their rejection of Him. They are made to feel how well He knows them, and their intent, and how its success would leave Him Master still, themselves alone undone by it. Quiet, simple, strong, irrefutable words, they penetrate through all the defenses of a seared conscience and a hardened heart, and confound, if they do not convert. We do not read of conversion; but then we are here occupied with another and very different subject, and tracing Israel's rejection of her King, as it goes on step by step to the end now so near, when He leaves desolate the House (no longer His Father's, but their own) to the Gentile invader.

1. For the moment He is in the House which He has cleansed, teaching publicly, as was His wont, and there the chief priests and elders of the people come upon Him with the question, "By what authority doest Thou these things? and who gave Thee this authority?"

It was the Sanhedrim, the highest religious authority itself among the people, that asked this; and their question implied their disclaimer of any authorization on their part. But it was a vain and foolish question: for as they knew on the one hand that He was no Rabbi of the schools, so on the other, as we know, the testimony of Scripture united with that of His miracles to proclaim Him what He was even now declaring Himself to be. But for those who were questioning Him there was a yet more simple ground of appeal. They had sent a special mission to the Baptist to investigate his claim; and the Baptist's own recognition of the Lord was known to all. They "sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth." What then was "the baptism of John? was it of heaven or of men?" Either they had decided about John's authority, or else they were incompetent to pronounce as to the Lord; and their verdict as to the one would necessarily include both: in any case they had the means of answering their own question.

And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I also will tell you by what authority I do these things: the [w]baptism of John, whence was it? From heaven or of men? But they reasoned among themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven, he will say, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men, we [x]fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered and said to Jesus, We know not. And he said unto them, [y]Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

w *cf.* Jno. 1. 19-28.

x Prov. 29. 25. ver. 46.

y *cf.* ch. 3. 3. ver. 32.

2 (28-32): The two sons.

2. But what think ye? A man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in the [z]vineyard. And he answered and said, I will not; [but] afterward he [a]repented and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise; but he answered and said, I [go], sir; and went [b]not. Which of the two did the will of his father? They say, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that the [c]tax-gatherers and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the tax-gatherers and the harlots [d]believed him; and ye, when ye saw it, did not repent afterwards, to believe him.

z *cf.* ch.20. 1 etc.

a *cf.* Lk. 15. 2, 7.

b *cf.*ch.7.21-23. *cf.* ch. 15.8.

c *cf.* Lk.7.29-50.

d *cf.* Lk. 3. 12, 13.

3 (33-46): The vineyard and the Heir.

3. Hear another parable: there was a man, a householder, who planted a [e]vineyard, and put a [f]hedge round it, and dug a wine-press in it, and built a [g]tower, and let it out to [h]husbandmen, and went abroad.

e ver. 28. *cf.*Is. 5.1-7. *cf.*Jer.2.21.

f Ps.80.8-13. *cf.*Num.23. 9.

g *cf.* Ps. 18. 10.

h *cf.*ch.23.2. *cf.*Ezek.34. 2, etc. *cf.* Song 8. 11, 12.

Answer it, however, they cannot: if they said the mission of John was from heaven, they had to believe the testimony that he gave; if they said, of men, they would be in direct opposition to the people, and theirs was no martyr-spirit to suffer for their convictions. It was easier, with all the humiliation it involved, to profess their ignorance; but then they were no court to adjudicate in claims of this kind: "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things."

2. Plainly it was conscience they needed, and the Lord has in turn a question for them. A man had two sons: one who to his bidding, "Go, work to-day in my vineyard," answers openly and defiantly "I will not;" while the other expresses at once his ready obedience. After all, the first repented and went; the second never did go. Which, then, did the will of his father? The answer is put into their mouths: they could only say, The first. Then He makes application for them: the tax-gatherers and harlots would go into the Kingdom of God before them. For John came in the way of righteousness, only demanding on their part an upright conscience to receive manifest truth, but, built up in legal self-righteousness, they had turned from him; while the people of evil life had been convicted and believed; and even this witness of repentant sinners *they* had refused.

3. He searches them out with another parable, in which Israel's history as a whole is shown to be of a piece with this, while He follows it on to the end soon coming, and shows them how their success against Him would only be ruinous defeat for themselves at last.

The figure of a vineyard had been used of old in the prophets with reference to Israel. The "man," the householder, could only partially represent God. Was it not a representation of things according to their own thoughts merely,

But when the [i]time of fruit drew nigh, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, to receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and [j]beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did to them likewise. And afterwards he sent to them his [k]son, saying, They will respect my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the [l]heir: come, let us kill him, and lay hold of his inheritance. And they took and cast him out of the vineyard and slew him. When, therefore, the lord of the vineyard cometh, what will he do to those husbandmen? [m]They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard to other husbandmen, who will render to him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The [n]stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner:

[i] *cf.* Mk. 11. 13.
[j] ch. 23. 35.
[k] *cf.* ch. 22. 42–45. *cf.* John 3. 16.
[l] *cf.* Gen. 37. 18. *cf.* Ex. 2. 14. *cf.* Acts 3. 13, 14, 17.
[m] *cf.* 2 Sam. 12. 5–9.
[n] Ps. 118. 22, 23. 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8.

that God was like a man in a far country, and things were in their hands as they proudly assumed? Yet their responsibility was fully granted, and let them take heed to it. All through the ages down, God had been sending to those in trust for Him, to get the fruit of His vineyard; and the prophets had been His messengers to them to present and urge His claim. How had they treated them? Certainly *they* well knew, whose claim had been, that if they had lived in their fathers' days, they would not have been "partakers with them in the blood of the prophets." They had beaten one, killed another, stoned another, and so whenever God had sent fresh witnesses.

But now He had sent His Son: there the full glory of the Speaker is flashed upon them; had He not title to say, without taking into account His divine knowledge, "They will respect *My Son*"?

But indeed He is not ignorant to what He sends Him: and now all that is in their hearts to do and what they will accomplish is pictured for them, as if it were a history of the past. What a testimony to the actors in it that are to be, —He face to face with them, with those clear, deep, always compassionate eyes looking into theirs! think after this of their going on to fulfil it. "But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves"—*not*, who art Thou? or who gave Thee this authority? but on the contrary, "*This is the heir;*" and their after action is all grounded upon this.

Yes, they could have been very tolerant of a false claim: the true one was quite another matter. The claim of God is uncompromising, and His yoke intolerable to the natural heart. The second psalm represents the refusal of Messiah as the Lord does, as the manifestation of the spirit which said, "Let us burst their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." Here it breathes of murder,—"Come, let us kill Him, and lay hold of His inheritance."

And the thing is done. The Lord quietly assures them, as He had done before with His disciples, that He is in fact to die. But if He be in reality the Son, will that secure them what they seek? "when the lord of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?" and they are forced to pronounce what is their own doom.

He confirms it from their own scriptures: for was not the chief corner stone of which the psalmist spoke to be a stone rejected by the builders in Israel? Was not "the Lord's doing" to be the reversal of their deed? But the result of it for that generation would be the taking from them of that Kingdom which in the person of its King they were thus refusing. It would be given to a *nation* bringing forth the fruits thereof: that is, not the Christian Church, but the

this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Wherefore I say unto you, that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given unto a [o]nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall [p]fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will [q]grind him to powder.

And when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they knew that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they [r]feared the multitudes, because they held him for a prophet.

o *cf.* Ezek. 37. 21–24. *cf.* Hos. 1. 10, 11. *cf.* Is. 26. 1, 2.
p Is. 8. 14, 15. *cf.* Acts 13. 41.
q *cf.* Dan. 2. 34, 35, 44, 45. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 7–10.
r *cf.* John 7. 44–46.

SUBDIVISION 3. (Chap. xxii. 1–14.)

The marriage of the King's Son.

1 (1–4): Called.

1 AND Jesus answered and spake again to them in parables, saying: The [s]kingdom of heaven is like a man, a king, who made a marriage for his son, and sent his servants to call those that had been [t]invited to the marriage, and they would not come. Again he sent other servants saying, Tell those that have been invited,

s *cf.* Lk. 14. 15–24.
t *cf.* ch. 21. 33.

Israel of the future; in fact the first nation which will be *all* holy. The terms of the new covenant expressly assure us of this.

Meanwhile "whosoever shall fall on this stone"—as the nation then were doing—"shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall"—in the day when it strikes the feet of the image, as Nebuchadnezzar, the head of the image, saw it—"it shall grind him to powder." At the coming of the Lord judgment will do its complete and effectual work.

The chief priests and Pharisees knew that it was of them that He was speaking; but His words held the people, and they could as yet do nothing. Those who have lost the fear of God are just those who will be most completely dominated by the fear of man.

SUBD. 3.

The parable of the marriage of the king's son is a parable of the Kingdom of heaven. Its subject, therefore, is not the response of Israel to God as under the law, or even to Christ come unto His own, as in that of the husbandmen. Responsibility as to the vineyard is no more in question, but as to the offer of grace made to them in the gospel after the Cross, and when the Spirit of God was in marvellous grace testifying through the apostles that upon their repentance there would still be for them the blotting out of their sins and the coming of times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, whom, though rejected, God would again send to them.* Not till after the definite rejection of this offer by Israel, does the message of the gospel go out to the Gentiles, as in the parable, which goes on to the end of this also, when the man that has not on a wedding garment is cast out. In this, too, the rejection of grace is figured, though here in one who might seem to have accepted it.

[1] We find the same parable in the gospel of Luke (chap. xiv. 16–24), but in briefer form, and without the dispensational character which is so manifest and appropriate in Matthew. In Luke it is simply a man who makes a feast: here it is the marriage-feast of a king's son. Marriage was in the Old Testament a familiar figure of covenant relationship between the people and their God; here with the Son of God—Messiah. The bride does not, however, come into the scene, but only those invited to the marriage, the joys and blessings of union being symbolized as a feast. The Jews are the already invited guests,

* Acts iii. 19–21. The Revised Version has here set right the strange error of the common one, which has "*when* the times of refreshing shall come," instead of "*so that* the times of refreshing may come."

Behold, I have [u]prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted beasts are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

2 (5-7): Rejection on either side.

2 But they made [v]light of it and went off, one to his field, another to his merchandise; and the rest laid hold upon his servants and ill-treated them and slew them. But the king was wroth, and sent his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and [w]burned up their city.

3 (8-10): The wedding furnished.

3 Then he saith unto his servants, The wedding indeed is ready, but those that were invited were not worthy: go out, therefore, into the [x]thoroughfares, and as many as ye shall find call to the marriage. And those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together as many as they found, both [y]bad and good; and the wedding was furnished with guests.

4 (11, 12): The failure still.

4 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man that had not on a [z]wedding-garment. And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, having no wedding-garment? And he was [a]speechless.

[u] *cf.* ch. 4. 17. *cf.* Prov. 9. 2.

[v] *cf.* Gen. 19. 14.

[w] Lk. 19. 27.

[x] *cf.* Acts 28. 28.

[y] *cf.* ch. 13. 47.

[z] *cf.* Lk. 15. 22 with Phil. 3. 7, 9.

[a] *cf.* Rom. 3. 19.

but not till after atonement had been made in the sacrifice of the Cross could the message go forth, "I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are now ready: come unto the marriage." Nothing is said of what the Cross is on the human side of it; we have only the result in divine grace; and that is "tidings of joy which shall be unto all people."

2 The messengers go out with this, but only to find how little it is this to those to whom it is sent. Only the general result as to Israel is given, and this is rejection whether it be manifest simply in making light of it and going off to other things, or in harsher treatment of the messengers, even to putting them to death. This brings sure retribution: "the king sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers and burned up their city." Israel is thus for the time being set aside,—left without priest or altar or sacrifice, as it is this day.

3 But divine goodness will not be frustrated in this way; and through Israel's fall salvation comes to the Gentiles. The invited guests were not worthy: the servants of the king are sent out therefore into the public thoroughfares to invite all without restriction of any kind—the universal call of the gospel now. "Bad and good" are welcome alike: salvation is needed by the best, sufficient for the worst. The response is still not universal as the call is; but the vacant seats are nevertheless filled: the wedding is furnished with guests.

4 But this, alas, is not yet the whole account. The Kingdom, as we have seen, in all these parabolic representations of it, in which the "mysteries" of it are told out,—the Kingdom while the King is absent and the administration in the hands of men—is in a mixed condition, the false found with the true; and needs in consequence that purging which when the King comes to take it into His own hands, it will surely receive. The gathering of the guests is on earth ideally, where of course, alone the confusion is, but even this is not stated, nor have we here any prophetic outline of final events. It is the awful fact alone that is put before us of what the end will reveal as to a class of which the man without a marriage garment is simply the representation. The coming of the King reveals them: a class which, with whatever profession, have not Christ, the precious gift of God's grace, and who alone is title and fitness for the eternal joy.

Whether the garment was a gift or not, and what it stands for, have been variously disputed. The circumstances of the case are sufficient proof that the multitude of invited could not be expected to have or to provide for themselves what would suit a royal feast. While the spiritual meaning can only be made

5 (13, 14): The recompense.

[5] Then the king said unto his servants, Bind him foot and hand, and cast him out into the [b] outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. For [c] many are called, but few chosen.

b ch. 8. 12. Rev. 22.15.

c ch. 20. 16. *cf.* Lk.12.32.

SUBDIVISION 4. (Chap. xxii. 15–46.)

Testing and tested.

1 (15-22): The claims of Cæsar and of God.

1. THEN the Pharisees went and took [d] counsel together how they might ensnare him in speech. And they sent to him their disciples with the [e] Herodians, saying, Teacher, we know that thou art [f] true, and teachest the way of God in truth, and carest not for any one, for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us, therefore, what thinkest thou? is it lawful to give [g] tribute to Cæsar, or not?

d Lk. 20. 20.

e Mk. 12.13-17. Lk. 20. 21-26.

f *cf.* Jno.3.2.

g *cf.* Jno.11. 48. *cf.* Lk. 3. 1.

clear by the language of the gospel as we find it elsewhere. The "robe of righteousness" (Isa. lxi. 10) with which God covers His people, and which, though it be put upon a prodigal, is the "best robe" in the Father's house, is only susceptible of the most evangelic meaning. Christ is alone "made unto us righteousness" (1 Cor. i. 30), and as with the first God-given covering for the nakedness of sinful man, death it is that in His wonderful way has furnished it. That He is God's free gift to all who will receive Him, will strike dumb every one who appears at last before God without this.

[5] Judgment follows. The refuser of Christ is really outside all the light of God by that very fact. He is but sent to his own place in the darkness outside the rejoicing in the house of God. There the awful sting of remorse must follow him: "*there* is the weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The last dread words here multiply this one man into a multitude indeed: "for many are called, but few chosen."

SUBD. 4.

Thus the Lord has made, and made good for Himself, the highest claim. He has searched out the hearts of His accusers, and summoned their consciences before Him, not in vain, though they have not yielded to their convictions. On the contrary we are now to find their whole strength massed against Him to try and remedy their desperate condition, and give Him, if possible, even yet an overthrow. For this Pharisees and Herodians combine together, and Sadducees seek to retrieve the lost battle of the Pharisees. But all is vain, and the leaders and factions among the people appear before Him only to receive severally specific judgment from Him, until He turns upon them at last with one decisive question which completely silences them all, and that with regard to the very claim which He is making. From that time they have but the one answer, in deeds, not words.

1. The Pharisees, who are all through the leaders, lead now in the attack. But they confess their fear in the subtlety with which they make it, sending their disciples instead of openly appearing themselves, and with them their adversaries the Herodians, with whom it would not be expected they could have collusion. Between them they would catch Him as between the opposite blades of shears; not with an argument either, but only a matter for His decision, as to which they can depend upon His entire and unfearing truthfulness, teaching the way of God in truth, and regarding not the person of men. "Tell us, therefore, what thinkest thou? is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?"

A dangerous question, however it were decided: whether to refuse it, under the iron heel of Rome as they were, or to yield it in the face of a people constantly fretting against the sign of their humiliation. Was He too, if indeed

But Jesus, [h] knowing their wickedness, said, Why tempt ye me, hypocrites? Show me the tribute-money. And they brought unto him a penny.* And he saith unto them, Whose is this [i] image and superscription? They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them, [j] Render then to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the [k] things that are God's. And when they heard it they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

2 (23-33): Relationships hereafter and the Scripture testimony as to death.

2. On that day, there came unto him Sadducees, who say there is [l] no resurrection; and they asked him, saying, Teacher, [m] Moses said, if a man die, not having

* "denarius."

h Jno. 2. 25. Jno. 6. 64.
i *cf.* Dan. 2. 31-43 with Dan. 3. 1.
j *cf.* ch. 17. 24-27. *cf.* Rom. 13. 7.
k *cf.* Is. 5. 7. *cf.* Mi. 6. 6-9.
l Mk. 12. 18-27. Lk. 20. 27-38. Acts 23. 8.
m Deut. 25. 5, 6. *cf.* Gen. 38. 8. *cf.* Ru. 4. 5.

their King, to bring them no deliverance? Would it not be the collapse of all His claims to leave a question of this sort even for a moment doubtful?

In reply, He assures them that their object was fully known to Him. They were hypocrites, only tempting Him; and yet for all that, they should have their answer; indeed should help to find it for themselves: let them show Him the tribute money. So they brought Him the Roman coin, and there was the image of Cæsar upon its face. "Whose is this?" He asks; and they say, "Cæsar's." "Render, then," He replies, "what is Cæsar's to Cæsar; and to God the things that are God's."

It is a mistake to consider this as simply settling the rights and distinguishing the jurisdictions of the civil and spiritual powers. It was the dominion of the Gentile over the people of God that was felt by the Pharisees,—a yoke under which they never would have come, had they rendered, as the Lord bids them, to God His own. It was the refusal of this which had put them into Cæsar's hands, and now to seek escape was only to refuse the chastisement of their sins, and thus was rebellion against God Himself.

The Gentile yoke had come as their father Jacob had long since prophesied. Issachar had become "like a strong ass, couching between the hurdles; and he saw rest that it was good, and the land that it was pleasant, and bowed his shoulder to bear and become servant to tribute" (Gen. xlix. 14, 15 *Notes*). Israel had accepted fellowship with the Gentile, and Cæsar's coin was only the sign of this. Gentile in heart and way, God had reckoned her where she belonged; but then she could not maintain an independence, which for her could only be another name for dependence on God. Let them give Cæsar his own; but let them give God His own also. When they really do this, there will be no question at all to settle as to Cæsar. Not by self-assertion, but by repentance only can deliverance come for them.

While the principle, of course, remains the same for the Christian, the *case* of the Christian is far different. He is not a citizen of earth, but a pilgrim and a stranger. He is to "render to all their due; tribute to whom tribute is due" (Rom. xiii. 1-7). For him, "the powers that be are ordained of God," and to "resist the power" would be to "resist the ordinance of God": while this, of course, defines the limit also. If there be collision between the higher and the lower power, the apostles' rule, "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts v. 29) is the only real fulfilment of duty both to God and man. To render to man what belongs to God is evil every way.

Thus the first attack upon the Lord turns only to the confusion of His adversaries: "when they heard it, they marvelled and left Him, and went their way."

2. There follows now an attack on the part of the Sadducees, the unbelievers in resurrection, who had their question (more honest, as it would seem, than that of the Pharisees), though displaying, as the Lord tells them, ignorance both of the Scriptures and the power of God. But the Pharisees on their part had

children, that his brother should marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

Now there were with us [n]seven brethren; and the first having married died, and, having no seed, left his wife unto his brother. In like manner, the second and the third, unto the seven. Last of all, the woman died also. In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

But Jesus answered and said unto them: Ye err; [o]not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the [p]angels of God in heaven. But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read what was spoken to you by God, [q]saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And when the multitudes heard it, they were [r]astonished at his doctrine.

n *cf.* 1 Tim. 1. 4.

o *cf.* Jno.20. 9. *cf.* Acts 13. 27.

p *cf.* Phil. 3. 21. *cf.* 1 Jno.3. 2.

q Ex. 3.6,16. Acts 7. 32.

r ch.7.28,29.

done much to give occasion to such difficulties with regard to the future life as their opponents here suggest; perhaps, in spite even of the Lord's words here, we are not at the present time altogether beyond them.

Their question is as to the relationship in the resurrection of a woman who, according to the law in Deuteronomy (xxv. 5, 6), had married seven brethren. "In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife shall she be of the seven: for they all had her?"

The Lord answers their question first, and then rebukes the unbelief which had inspired it. The question He answers with a simple affirmation, in which He contradicts another article of their unbelieving creed,— that there were no angels (Acts xxiii. 8). It was sufficient to meet a mere argument from their ignorance with His own perfect knowledge. Angels there were, and in the resurrection the saints would be like these, neither marrying nor giving in marriage. They knew not the power of God, and could conceive of nothing else than a mere reproduction of earthly conditions. Their perplexity was but the fruit of their own carnal imaginations.

But as for the truth of resurrection, it underlay the very simplest assurance of God's covenant-relationship with men. The "dead" were for the Sadducees extinct, and the denial of any enduring personality was the natural root of the denial of resurrection. It is here, therefore, that the Lord meets them; for, if death be not extinction, but the spirit survives it, not only is all argument for extinction taken away, but this survival by itself implies that death is but a temporary interference with what creation shows to be God's thought of man, and may be perfected but cannot be abandoned. If man still continue to exist in death, then it is natural and reasonable that, whether for judgment or reward, the body should rise again.

Sadduceeism was thorough in its denial; and for the Sadducee "I am the God of Abraham," said to Moses at the bush, could be but mockery. Abraham was a shadow that had passed without even hope of recall. The God of a nonentity —what of comfort or blessing was in that? Could there be even such?

It was by that title, the "God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob," and as that "I am," who had looked upon and had respect unto His people, that God had sent forth Moses from "the bush" to be their deliverer. Sadduceeism never could have been the gospel of that deliverance, nor the inspiration of it. A living God in covenant with men meant life, not death; and if death were, then a life supreme above it. Thus resurrection was the necessary filling out of such a declaration: the hand that God held out to man was not to clasp the listless fingers of a corpse.

3 (34-40): The heart of the law.

3. But when the Pharisees heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. And one of them, a lawyer, asked him, tempting him, Teacher, which is the [s]great commandment in the law? And he said unto him, Thou shalt [t]love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment.

And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy [u]neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hangeth the [v]whole law, and the prophets.

4 (41-46): The testers tested.

4. And when the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus [w]asked them, saying, [x]What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, [y]David's. He saith unto them, How then doth David in Spirit call him Lord, [z]saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I put thine enemies beneath thy feet? If David, then, call him Lord, [a]how is he his son?

And no one was [b]able to answer him a word, neither did any one from that day dare to ask him further.

s *cf.* ch. 5. 17-20. Mk. 12. 28-34.
t Lk. 10. 25-27. Deut. 6. 5. Deut. 10, 12.
u Lev. 19. 18. ch. 19. 19. Rom. 13. 9. Jas. 2. 8. 1 Jno. 4. 20.
v Gal. 5. 14. *cf.* 1 Cor. 13. 1-3, 13.
w *cf.* ch. 21. 24.
x Mk. 12. 35-37. Lk. 20. 41-44. *cf.* Acts 2. 22-28.
y *cf.* 2 Sam. 7. 12-14.
z Ps. 110. 1. Acts 2. 34. Heb. 1. 13. Heb. 10. 12, 13.
a *cf.* Jno. 1. 14.

cf. Rom. 1. 3, 4. b *cf.* Lk. 14. 6; *cf.* Jno. 18. 6.

3. So the Pharisees hear that He has put the Sadducees to silence, and they are gathered together; not, alas, to own His divine wisdom, but to "tempt" Him yet again. Still there has been an effect produced, as Mark tells us, upon the questioner, and some better thing is hidden under the test question he proposes. Matthew takes no note of this because he is occupied with the position of the nation as a whole with regard to the Lord, and the state of the individual does not indicate this.

The question is, "which is the *great* commandment of the law?" The answer shows what is the heart of it, the life-pulse beating through it all. Alas, that this should be a question. The apostle answers it afterward in a similar manner to the Lord here,—"*love* is the fulfilling"—or, the fullness—"of the law" (Rom. xiii. 10). God claims heart and soul and mind; but then, on that very account, man as the image of God must come in under it. Thus the second commandment is like unto the first: that commandment which they were so manifestly breaking. Nay, here was the Image of God indeed; and in Him they had seen and hated both Himself and His Father (John xv. 24).

But He adds no word of reproach; only enlarges upon the central place which these two commandments had, not in the law only, but also in the prophets: wherever, therefore, the mind of God was expressed. All, in fact, depended upon them there: they were the moral unity manifested in all.

4. And now the Lord appeals to them as they are gathered there before Him as to that which was now for them the question of questions: what do they think of Christ? "whose son is He?" To that they readily reply, "The son of David." This was the truth, and they knew He would not deny it: it was in fact a question which any child among them could have answered.

He did not deny it: it was truth, but was it the whole truth? "How then," He asks, "does David in Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand until I put thine enemies beneath thy feet'? If David, then, call Him Lord, how is He his Son?"

The argument was complete and crushing, and so they felt it.* "No one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day did any one dare to ask Him further."

*It "proceeded, of course," says Edersheim, "on the two-fold supposition that the psalm (cx.) was Davidic, and that it was Messianic. Neither of these statements would have been

SUBDIVISION 5. (Chap. xxiii.)

Judgment pronounced.

1 (1-12): Barren profession in Moses' seat.

1 (1-7): the rule of the rabbi.

1. [1] THEN spake Jesus unto the multitudes and to his disciples, saying, The scribes and the Pharisees have [c]set themselves down in Moses' seat: all things, therefore, that they bid you, do and keep; but do not after their works, for they say and do not. And they bind [d]heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger. But all their works they

[c] Lev.10.11. Mal. 2. 7,8. Rom.2.19-22.

[d] Lk. 11. 46. Acts 15.10.

SUBD. 5.

They are silenced, but not won. The human heart is a citadel that can entrench itself against the clearest evidence; and the conscience can harden itself by repeated rejection of the truth, until light be as darkness. Thus it is now that He who would (how often !) have gathered the children of Jerusalem, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, is forced to give them up to the avenger soon to come. Israel is doomed, and the lips of divine love have to pronounce her doom, until she shall say in truth and penitence, "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

But the terrible denunciation that follows is rather against the leaders that have misled her to her ruin, though the blind leaders and the led fall together into it. From the necessity of the case, the judgment pronounced is given in the most open manner in the presence of the multitude, preceded by that picture of the rule of the rabbi, which could not but appeal to the experience of all who heard it. Yet it left them under it, of their own choice.

1. [1] The scribes and Pharisees had set themselves down in Moses' seat. It was their own act, and yet could not be looked upon wholly as a usurpation. An earnest zeal for the law of God in opposition to prevailing laxity had put them originally in the place that they now occupied. Degeneration had come in, and they had fallen from the ancient spirit while retaining the place,—a place in which the Lord evidently recognizes them here, while recognizing fully also the degeneracy. They were now mere barren professors, contradicting their profession with their lives; while the rule of the rabbi was a tyranny of the severest kind, binding upon men's shoulders burdens grievous to be borne—a growing oppression, more and more intolerable, and never lightened.

"Rabbinism placed the ordinances of tradition above those of the Law, and this by a necessity of the system, since they were professedly the authoritative exposition and the supplement of the written law. And although it was a general rule that no ordinance should be enjoined heavier than the congregation could bear, yet it was admitted that, whereas the words of the Law contained what 'lightened,' and what 'made heavy,' the words of the scribes contained only what 'made heavy.' Again it was another principle that where an 'aggravation' or increase of the burden had once been introduced, it must continue to be observed."* Well might the Lord say, that they would not put forth even a finger to move the intolerable load.

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questioned by the Synagogue. But we could not rest satisfied with the explanation that this sufficed for the purpose of Christ's argument, if the foundation on which it rested could be seriously called in question. Such, however, is not the case. To apply Ps. cx., verse by verse and consistently, to any one of the Maccabees, were to undertake a critical task which only a series of unnatural explanations of the language could render possible. Strange, also, that such an interpretation of what at the time of Christ would have been a comparatively young composition, should have been wholly unknown alike to Sadducee and Pharisee. For our own part, we are content to rest the Messianic interpretation on the obvious and natural meaning of the words taken in connection with the general teaching of the Old Testament about the Messiah, on the undoubted interpretation of the ancient Jewish synagogue, on the authority of Christ, and on the testimony of history." (Life and Times of Jesus, vol. ii. 405.)

* Edersheim, vol. ii. p. 407.

do to [e]be seen of men: for they make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders [of their garments],* and love the [f]chief place at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men Rabbi.

2 (8-12): the disciples in contrast.

[2] But be not [g]ye called Rabbi: for one is your teacher, and all ye are brethren. And call not [any] your father upon earth: for [h]one is your Father, who is heavenly. Nor be ye called leaders: for [i]one is your

e ch. 6.1,2,5, 16. Rom. 2. 28.
f Mk. 12. 38, 39. Lk. 11. 43. Lk. 20. 46.
g Jas. 3. 1. cf. 1Cor. 3. 5.
h ch. 6. 9. Mal. 1. 6.
i ver. 9. Jno. 13. 13.

* Some omit.

With the people all this, of course, increased their power; and power and place was what they were constantly seeking. Thus they made broad the 'phylacteries' or parchment strips in which they strove after their peculiar manner to have the law in the most literal way as "frontlets between the eyes" (Deut. vi. 8)*; while the actually enjoined tasselled "borders" (Num. xv. 38) they enlarged, to make them conspicuous, as the Lord reproaches them. Naturally with this there was the love of conspicuous places also, at feasts and in the synagogues, and of greetings in the markets in which they were to be accosted as Rabbi, with all due respect.

[2] Such were the Jewish leaders: among the disciples Jesus enjoins them that such things were not to be. They were not to be called Rabbi, but to be all brethren, with Christ alone their real Teacher. There was to be no *authority* among them but His own; no claim of spiritual fatherhood but for the Heavenly Father; nor of leadership, again, for any but Christ. The "leader" here (καθηγητης) is more than teacher: he is the teacher who may have many teachers under him. All this, as it plainly calls for most serious attention on the part of all who call Christ Lord in truth, so also it needs wisdom in the application: for all these terms, "teacher," "father," "leader,†" are applied in Scripture itself to disciples, and cannot be meant, therefore, to be in an absolute way forbidden. But it was in Israel then, as it has come to be so largely in the Christian Church to-day, that those who should have been the *servants* of their brethren claimed to be masters, and stood between the consciences of men and Him who is alone the Lord of the conscience. Neither the Church as a whole nor any class of men in it can claim aright authoritative place for their teaching, which Scripture alone (as the word of the Lord) has; and yet this is what, with many modifications, is continually being done, and the people of God also are on their side not merely allowing but prompting the claim. In this way the word of God loses irreparably; it is made plastic in the hands of men; and, dethroned from its place of authority, it becomes subject to the reproach which attaches to all human handiwork: infidelity finds its own in this degradation. The louder and more authoritative the Church's voice, the more that of God through His word becomes silenced and unheard.

But how different is the "ministry" which is really that, which seeks no lordship for itself, and no authority, but, like the Baptist of old, points only to that Other, in whose presence it stands self-emptied, because filled, satisfied, glorified with the light, unseen of the world, into which it has entered! True, it will not lead men universally to faith, which Christ's own presence in it was not able to do; yet the faith to which it brings men will be how different! But it is not of this the Lord speaks here. He carries us back instead to that glimpse

* They were "square capsules, covered with leather, containing on small scrolls of parchment these four sections of the law: Ex. xiii. 1-10; 11-16; Deut. vi. 4-9; xi. 13-21. The phylacteries were fastened by long leather straps to the forehead, and round the left arm, near the heart."

† The exact word here is only found in the New Testament in this place, but it is only an intensive form of that used in Acts xv. 22, "leading men" and in Heb. xiii. 7, 17, 20, "leaders," which the common version translates "those that have the rule."

2 (13-33): Characterization for judgment. *a* (13-22): as to light. 1 (13): rebellion against the Kingdom. 2 (15): eager proselytism to worse evil.

leader, Christ. But the [j]greater of you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall [k]exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted.

2. *a* [1] But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye [l]shut up the kingdom of heaven before men: for ye neither enter yourselves, nor suffer those that are entering to enter.*

[2] Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

[j] ch. 20. 26, 27.
[k] Lk. 14. 11. Lk. 18. 14.
[l] Lk. 11. 52. *cf.* 1 Thess. 2. 16. *cf.* Ezek. 34. 18.

* Verse 14 is omitted by the editors.

of an open heaven, which He so lately Himself has opened to them, and again He repeats: "The greater of you shall be your servant." In service—in the ability to serve—true greatness is. And if the spirit of service be love, and love be the spirit of heaven, then it must be—there can be no avoidance of so plain a fact—that "whosoever shall exalt himself among you shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted."

2. The Lord turns now and addresses personally the leaders of the people, smiting them with a sevenfold perfect "woe," because of their condition which He reveals in successive flashes of awful wrath. Yet no mere outburst of passionate emotion is it that manifests itself in these burning words. They are measured utterances in which the truth of divine judgment is as plain as its reality. And even in form, as they are sealed with the number of perfection, which is at the same time the stamp of an oath,* so this seven is in its structure, like that of the creative days, a 3. 3. 1, beginning indeed with the "light," which is in these "blind guides" but darkness, in the first three woes; in the second three, stigmatizing their duplicity—their double life; while the final one, which has the characters of both preceding sections, brands them as the true children of those who slew the prophets, however much (now that these were dead) they might build their sepulcres.

a [1] The first "woe" deals with their opposition to the Kingdom of heaven; which they shut up in the face of men, themselves neither entering in, nor (as far as lay in them) suffering others to enter. As it is put in Luke, they had "taken away the key of knowledge." With their legal and traditional teachings they had barred man's approach to the only place of blessing in subjection to the glorious King in whom the Kingdom was presented to them, so that the outcasts of Israel, the "tax-gatherers and harlots," went into it more easily than they.

Thus they had not the light, and had refused the light: for if "light had come into the world," it is necessarily self-manifesting, as well as that which manifests other things; and men who refuse it do so, not because of insufficient evidence, but because they "*love* darkness rather than light." And such were the leaders of Israel: here is their condition written upon their forehead.

[2] But while they had taken away the key of real knowledge, it was in perfect accord with this that they should be zealots of their own false knowledge, and eager to gain proselytes to it. Perfectly accordant, too, it was that they should, in the condition in which they were, have proselytes that would go beyond themselves. Calling the light darkness they naturally called the darkness light, and as light would propagate it. The second woe, therefore, follows the first in easily intelligible order.†

* "To swear" is in Hebrew to "use or name seven (victims or witnesses) as to oneself, *i. e.* to bind oneself by an attested oath." (*Davies' Heb. Lexicon.*) Compare Gen. xxi. 28. Beersheba is thus the "well of seven" or "of the oath."

† The omission of the fourteenth verse here is justified as well by its character as by the textual evidence; for in this place it would not suit, however characteristic of the leaders it might be, and was. It is found in Mark and Luke.

because ye [m]compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is become [such] ye make him two-fold more a son of hell than yourselves.

3 (16-22): perversion as to holy things.

[3] Woe unto you, ye [n]blind guides, who say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing, but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is debtor! Ye fools and blind, for which is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing, but whosoever shall swear by the gift that is upon it, he is debtor. Ye blind, for whether is greater the gift or the [o]altar that sanctifieth the gift? He therefore that sweareth by the altar sweareth by it and by all things that are upon it. And he that sweareth by the temple sweareth by it and by him who dwelleth therein. And he that sweareth by heaven sweareth by the throne of God and by him who sitteth upon it.

b [1] (23-28): their duplicity.

1 (23, 24): with profession of whole hearted obedience.

b [1] Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay [p]tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have left out the [q]weightier matters of the law, judgment and mercy and faith: these ought ye to have done and not have left out the other. Ye blind guides, that [r]strain out the gnat and drink down the camel.

2 (25, 26): lusts within.

[2] Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye cleanse the [s]outside of the cup and of the dish, but within they are full of rapine and indulgence. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside may become clean also.

3 (27, 28): corruption of death Godward.

[3] Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like [t]whitened sepulcres, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but within are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so do ye outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

m Acts 2.10. *cf.* Lk.9.49. *ctr.*1 Cor.3. 4, 5.

n ch. 15. 14. Is. 9. 16. Mal. 2. 8.

o ch.5.33-37. *cf.*Ex.29.37.

p cf. Lk. 18. 12. Lk. 11. 42.

q 1 Sa.15.22. Prov. 21. 3. Hos. 6. 6. Mi. 6. 6-8.

r cf. Jno.18. 28. Lev. 11. 20, 23, 41. Lev. 11. 4.

s Mk.7.4,8,9. Lk. 11. 39, 40. Ps. 51. 6.

t Lk. 11. 44. *cf.* Ps. 5. 9. *cf.* Acts 23. 3. *cf.* Phil. 3. 4-6 with 1 Tim.1.15.

[3] The third woe again shows how the light in them was darkened by their inversion of true proportion as to the holy things. With them the gold of the temple was more highly estimated than the temple itself, and the gift than the altar that sanctified it. And then this casuistry was used to teach men how they could swear vain oaths and be excused responsibility—a responsibility which the Lord affirms in every case.

b [1] The three following woes are plainly different from the preceding ones. They show us the double life of these Jewish leaders. In the first case, the profession of absolute integrity could hardly be more complete than in paying tithes of the very mint and anise and cummin, the least product of their fields; yet on another side there was an absolute deficiency in that which should have been rendered. The moral elements, the weightier matters of the law, were just with them the things that had *no* weight. They strained carefully out the gnat in such things, but they swallowed easily the camel!

[2] Then the cup and dish they cleansed on the outside; within they could keep them full of rapine and indulgence. With a correct outside the lusts within were retained and sanctioned.

[3] The third woe speaks of spiritual death within, with a good looking exterior

c (29-36): memorializing the prophets; whose return would manifest the reality of things.

c Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye [u] build the sepulcres of the prophets, and adorn the tombs of the just, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. So that ye bear witness to yourselves that ye are the [v] sons of those that killed the prophets. Fill ye up also your fathers' measure. Ye serpents, [w] brood of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell? Wherefore behold, *I* send unto you prophets and wise men and scribes; and some of them ye shall [x] kill and crucify, and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city; that upon you may come [y] all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous [z] Abel to the blood of [a] Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation.

3 (37-39): The wings that would have compassed, and the house left till their return to God.

3. [b] O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often

[u] Lk. 11.47, 48. *cfr.* Dan. 9. 5-8.

[v] Acts 7. 51, 52.

[w] ch. 3. 7. ch. 12. 34.

[x] *cf.* Jno. 16. 2. *cf.* Acts 5. 40. *cf.* Acts 7. 54-60.

[y] *cf.* Rev. 18. 24.

[z] Gen. 4. 8-10.

[a] *cf.* Zech. 1. 1. *cf.* 2 Chron. 24. 20-22.

[b] Lk. 13. 34, 35. *cf.* Lk. 19. 41, 42.

only, like a whitened sepulcre. This is the most inward aspect of the evil, but it presents the same duplicity as those preceding it.

c In the next and last case, there is a return to the beginning. The opposition to God with which this characterization began is here as real as there; yet it is covered with a veil which might hide it, not only from others but from themselves. The dead prophets they memorialized and honored—built sepulcres to the men their fathers killed. And this honor to the dead might well save them from all identification with the men that killed them, though these might unfortunately be their fathers. Alas, their present opposition to the Kingdom of God showed how much value was to be attached to such a profession of regard for men who lay quietly in their graves and never troubled them. They were witnesses themselves that they were children of those who slew the prophets. Let them fill up then the measure of their fathers: fill it up and more they would, as already He had shown them, for these with whom He was now face to face would be His betrayers and murderers.

And He would send them prophets and wise men and scribes, and the old history would be repeated. With the long record of ages before them, and that history of their forefathers preaching to them of God's controversy with them for their sins, they would renew and consummate it in their own persons, making themselves heirs of all that long reign of unbelief and evil, of the blood-shedding crying out to God from Abel to Zechariah slain between the temple and the altar, in the very face of God Himself. If this were the Zechariah the prophet, of the returned remnant,* how the guilt of Israel is emphasized in this! and "which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" are Stephen's words to them at a later time. Upon this generation was to come the recompense of that long wearing out of the saints of God.

3. But here the pent-up love in the heart of Christ breaks out in a lament over the city which had rejected Him. City as it was of murderous hatred

* There seems no good reason for supposing any other than Zechariah the prophet to be meant, though Zechariah the son of Jehoiada is generally taken to be. But this leaves the "son of Barachias" to be accounted for, when the "son of Jehoiada" also would have better reminded them of the history. It seems also too far back (in Joash's time) for the Lord's purpose, when summing up the guilt of the people.

As to Zechariah the prophet, he was son of Berachiah, and grandson of Iddo, and "the Jewish Targum states that Zechariah the son of Iddo, a prophet and priest, was slain in the sanctuary" (See "The Irrationalism of Infidelity," by J. N. Darby, pp. 150–159).

would I have [c]gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye [d]would not. Behold, [e]your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall in no wise see me henceforth, [f]until ye shall say, Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

c *cf.* ch. 11. 28-30. *cf.* Deut. 32. 28, 29.
d *cf.* Jno. 5. 40.
e *ctr.* ch. 21. 13.
f Ps. 118. 26.

against those sent to it of God, how often would *He* have gathered her children together, as the hen gathers her brood under her wings! but they would not. Now their house—which He could no longer call His Father's—was left to them as they would have it; but to real desolation. Nor would they see Him henceforth, according to the blessing which those rejected prophets had prophesied should yet be theirs, until, with hearts disciplined with sorrow, and in judgment made to learn the righteousness which alone could be the preparation for it, they should be enabled from their heart to say, "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Div. 6.

We now enter upon the consideration of a most interesting and important group of prophecies, the importance of which is seen by the place it occupies in all three of the synoptic Gospels. Matthew, as we might expect from its character, gives it most fully; the others in an abridged form, and with certain differences which will claim special consideration when (if the Lord will) we take up those gospels. They treat as a whole of the "end of the age," of the coming of the Lord, therefore, which closes it, and this in its relation to the three classes of which Scripture speaks, "the Jew, the Gentile, and the Church of God." Mark and Luke omit what relates to the last two. Matthew does not give them in this order, but what relates to the Church comes parenthetically, and in parabolic form, between the others.

This mode of presentation, and still more some of the detail, show us, all through, Israel as the central figure upon earth, and giving character to the presentation. The Israelitish part comes first (xxiv. 1–42); that referring to the Church is in veiled speech, and as an appendix to it, and here, if Christians are seen as virgins going forth to meet the Bridegroom, the Bridegroom Himself is Israel's,—the virgins and the bride are not the same, (though the Church stands in this relationship in a higher, a heavenly sphere)—and in the final judgment-scene again, the "brethren" of the King are Jewish. These things must be more fully considered when we come to them, but it is of primary importance to interpretation to make such distinctions. Through lack of it confusion has been introduced where every thing is simple, and along with this, the so called "spiritualizing" process has combined to deprive the Lord's people of much that would, by its extensive connection with other prophecies both in the Old Testament and New, have opened up the mind of God as to the future in a way that otherwise, perhaps, could hardly be attained. Much else, also, besides prophecy, is certain to be obscure where this is. Scripture is so united with scripture, and truth with truth, that no part can be disarranged without disordering the rest. On the other hand, thank God, no truth can be made clear without helping to clear other truth, if followed to its results; and the clue thus put into our hands by God is of priceless value for those that desire to walk amid divinely given certainties rather than by any light of merely human kindling.

For this reason it cannot be strange if we seek to look closely into the meaning of that which is before us here, and examine also some at least of the various interpretations put upon it, with such care as may be needful to form a positive judgment of what the truth is that is taught us in it. We need not merely probable but positive truth. *Probable* truth may be positive error. We need in Scripture to be able to say, "we know," although to many this may be what

DIVISION 6. (Chaps. xxiv., xxv.)

The Putting down of Evil at the Consummation of the Age.

SUBDIVISION 1. (Chap. xxiv. 1–44.)

Christ's coming in relation to the elect people (Israel).

1 (1-14): The beginning of birth-pains. 1 (1-3): the knowledge sought.

1. [1] AND Jesus [g] went out and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him to point out to him the [h] buildings of the temple. But he answered and

[g] *cf.* ch. 21. 17.
[h] Mk. 13. 1, 2. Lk. 21. 5, 6.

they stamp as dogmatism merely. Scripture can mean nothing less than this when it proclaims to us a "full assurance of understanding" also, as well as "of faith," and "hope."

SUBD. 1.

It is of first importance then to realize that, in all this first part of the prophecy, it is Israel, or a company of Israelitish disciples, with which we have to do. The twelve were as yet fully that, although the Church or assembly had been spoken of to them. But the foremost among them, and to whom the Lord had especially addressed Himself, needed, as we know, long afterward, to have a special vision to make him go to a Gentile, and the question in which they all unite when with the Saviour after His resurrection, and in the fulness of hope induced by it, is yet, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore the Kingdom to Israel?" Certainly then, of the Church, as Paul spoke of it, they could have as yet no conception; of what we call commonly the Christian dispensation they could have had no expectation; if we are reminded of the parables of the thirteenth chapter, what they had gathered from them we know not; but we know that they had not realized as yet the truth of the Lord's death and resurrection which He had in the plainest way and at various times declared, and yet these were fundamental to all the rest.

It is not meant by this to limit what He might now declare, for to suppose this would be in contradiction to what has been already said. He spoke of much that would only open up as they went on, and which even the gift of the Spirit did not at once make plain. This the book of Acts fully shows, with much else. It does not therefore limit the Lord's communications, although we know that there *were* things of which He could not as yet even speak; but we shall shortly find that it does affect important points in what is now before us, as for instance in regard to that coming of the Lord and that "consummation of the age," of which they question Him.

It is plain, then, that they were Jews not only in fact but in spirit, these disciples of the Lord. The questions they ask must be apprehended from this point of view, and no other; and this will help us to understand the parabolic way in which (even to them) the Christian portion of His answer is introduced. I do not forget that its being Christian even has on the other side been denied by some for whom the Jewish character of much has overshadowed the rest. All this shows how little we can afford to take anything for granted here, and the care with which we must examine things which for the mass of readers even may be undoubted.

1. [1] Let us now take up the question of the disciples which the Lord answers in the chapter before us. He has left finally the temple, as no longer the Father's house. Israel had made it but a robbers' den; and that not merely the traffickers whom He had so easily driven out, but much more the people as a whole, who had refused not only the messengers from time to time sent to them by God, but now the Son of His love, the Witness not of His righteousness alone but of His grace. The vineyard should be their own; and for that they were ready to kill the Heir of it. He could only therefore leave them to their choice, though with His heart wrung at the thought of all that this meant of necessity for them.

said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, 'There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And

t Lk. 19. 44. cf. 1 Ki. 9. 8. cf. Ps. 79. 1. cf. Is. 64. 11.

But His disciples are held by other and very different thoughts. Herod's magnificent temple, not even yet complete, though now nearly fifty years building, and growing thus continually under their eyes, the glory of Israel, spite of the murderous hands that built it—the temple drew them yet. "What manner of stones and what buildings are here!" they urge, as if in intercession for that house which He was leaving desolate. But He answers at once, "See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." For Herod's temple as such there can be no regret, with one who looks on more than the outside.

But it seems to linger yet in their hearts; and on the Mount of Olives, as He sits with the city over against Him, they come to Him to ask when these things shall be; and they add two other questions which in their minds were no doubt practically one,—"what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the consummation of the age?*"

The "age," in their thoughts, as already said, could not be any Christian age, of which they had no idea; it was the age in which they lived, and which was for the Jew the age of law. There would follow it the "days of Messiah," and the coming of Messiah would bring them in. There was no interval thought of as taking place between the two, and certainly for the disciples here, no considerable time to elapse before He would return to Jerusalem, and take the Kingdom now denied Him. That time the Lord shows them to be longer than they imagined, though still leaving it largely indefinite, and certainly not interposing a Christian or Gentile age between that present one and His coming to set up the Kingdom, rather making it a protraction of the Jewish "age" itself. The gospel of the Kingdom is indeed to be preached in all the earth for a witness, and "then shall the end come"—the end of that age about which they had inquired. There is no hint as yet of any Christian one.

It was this, doubtless, which helped to confuse the old interpreters. They could see that there was no sign of Christian times before it, and that the end of which the Lord speaks, with the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place had to do with Israel—"them that were in Judea." They naturally connected this with the question, "when shall these things"—the destruction of the temple and what was connected with it—"be?" There seemed indeed no other answer to it than this. Consequently the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus was intended to be pictured—Daniel certainly had spoken of this (chap. ix. 26); but as a consequence also the coming of the Son of man immediately following must be providential merely. Thus the interpretation was complete.

A reference to the same prophecy as given by Luke (chap. xxi.) would seem to confirm this: for here certainly Jerusalem is spoken of as compassed with armies, the Jews led captive and dispersed among the nations, and Jerusalem trodden down of the Gentiles till the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled. No one questions, or could question, that here is its sack by Titus; and here is the same warning to flee to the mountains, as given in Matthew. The interpretation seems thus fully confirmed.

For the disciples indeed such a coming of the Son of man could in no wise be what they expected or desired. It was no restoration of the Kingdom to Israel; nothing, indeed, but vengeance upon her; no fulfilment of hopes, such as the Old Testament prophets had inspired, of that blessing for the earth even, which was in them always connected with the restoration and exaltation of Israel. Rather would it be the complete setting aside of this. The coming of the Son of man also in Daniel is always to receive a Kingdom, displacing all the kingdoms of the world; and that, not by a slow, leavening process, which would be

* It is not *kosmos* here, the physical world, but *aion*, "age," a marked off period of time.

[j] as he sat upon the mount of Olives, his disciples came to him privately, saying, Tell us, [k] when shall these

[j] Mk. 13. 3-37. Lk. 21. 7-37.
[k] *cf.* Lk. 17. 20-37.

transformation instead of displacement, but by a sudden blow as of a stone falling from heaven upon the feet of the world-colossus, overthrowing and shattering it as in a moment. How great the contrast between the Son of man shattering the Gentile powers and bringing Israel into blessing and supremacy, and the appearing of the Son of man here to put Jerusalem under the iron heel of the Gentiles!

Yet the Son of man appearing in the clouds of heaven seems in manifest connection with Daniel (vii. 13, 14), as the abomination of desolation is in our Lord's reference. Moreover, this coming itself, in the clouds of heaven, and with the angels, reads little like a mere providential judgment. Instead of its being to destroy Jerusalem, it is spoken of as coming after it, and separate, therefore, from it. Nay, in Luke, where alone the treading down is spoken of, this goes on until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, and then come the signs in the heavens, and soon the Son of man.

In Matthew, when He comes, He sends His angels to "gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other," and this might be thought to refer to the day of judgment, by one holding the common views, but could not in any sense apply to the long past judgment upon Jerusalem. Rather is it, if in connection with Daniel, the exact opposite of Israel's dispersion completed under Titus; it is the *regathering* of the elect nation under the "wings" that would so willingly have long since been spread over them. And this connects with the judgment of the Gentile nations, "when the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, and then shall sit upon the throne of His glory." Then shall "all the nations be gathered before Him, and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats" (chap. xxv. 31, 32). By no fair inference can this be disconnected from the coming of the Son of man in the earlier part of the same prophecy, to which it self-evidently indeed refers. Nothing but the necessity of an unscriptural theory could have disjoined them from one another.

Thus the coming of the Son of man is most clearly future, a personal coming to set up that kingdom over the earth, for which the disciples rightly looked. But this being established, another result follows,—that the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, as given in Luke, must be distinguished widely from what we find in Matthew. The abomination of desolation standing in the holy place is not even connected with the worship of the Roman standards at the taking of the city over eighteen centuries ago: it is a yet future thing, and in close connection with that coming of the Son of man, of which it is the great and conclusive sign.

To see this clearly we have but to keep together in our minds what the Lord so plainly links together here. The abomination of desolation marks the beginning of a tribulation so severe, that, "except those days should be shortened, no flesh should be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." It is plain, therefore, that a time so characterized could not stretch over centuries. Scripture has indeed, over and over again, marked the exact length of it; but this we need not now take up: it is evident that it can be but a short time; but then "immediately after the tribulation of those days" come the signs of the Son of man at hand. Thus it must as plainly be yet future, as the destruction of the city in Luke is long past. In Matthew there is no destruction of the city; in Luke no abomination in the holy place: the prophecies are different, although given by the Lord at the same time.

But this gives rise to another question: if that of which Matthew speaks is still in the future, how can it be the end of the *Jewish* age? Christianity has in fact replaced Judaism for God upon the earth; and, even though Israel has still promises to be fulfilled to her naturally, when the Lord appears, how can there be any recurrence between now and then of any remnant of the Jewish age?

things be? and what shall be the sign of thy [l]coming, and of the [m]consummation of the age?

[l] ver. 30. cf. 2 Pet. 3. 4.
[m] ch. 13. 39, 49.

This question can only be answered by turning once more to the Old Testament to which we are referred here—to Daniel: in his prophecy of the seventy weeks, the whole connection of what we have before us is made plain to us.

In the ninth chapter we find Daniel pleading with God for his people Israel, and for the city called by God's name. God in answer sends the angel Gabriel to acquaint him with His purposes. "Seventy weeks" (of years,) he is told, "are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city to finish transgression and to make an end of sins, and to make atonement for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the holy of holies." This last expression points definitely to national restoration and blessing, and all that is spoken of here has reference to the same thing. At the end of this 490 years their sins are to be brought to an end, everlasting righteousness brought in *for them*. As with the prophecy in Matthew, the end of this is plainly not reached yet, however long ago the time began; and the end cannot be before the coming of the Son of man, as the Lord in agreement with Daniel, declares here. Up to that time their deliverance is not reached; and Zechariah shows how it will be effected (xiv. 1–5).

There is again, however, a great difficulty. Four hundred and ninety years from the decree to restore and to build Jerusalem have long run out,—had nearly done so when Christ appeared publicly in Israel, and yet the blessing for them did not come. Nay, that time was some years past, when the Romans, in sharpest contrast with the promise here, *destroyed* the sanctuary. But all this, let us notice is in the prophecy itself: sixty-nine weeks (483 years) carry us already as far as "Messiah the Prince" (ver. 25), and then He is "cut off and has nothing," as the margin better renders (ver. 26); and after that, "the people of the prince that shall come destroy the city and the sanctuary." So that the prophecy shows us that there would be this seeming contradiction,—Messiah come, but not accomplishing the blessing; cut off, and so having nothing (to us with regard to Israel a thing perfectly plain); and still the prophecy goes on to the "end of the war," as far as which "desolations are determined." Until this therefore the prophecy cannot end.

Accordingly now, just at the close, we hear of the final, seventieth week: "And he shall confirm a [not "the"] covenant with many [properly "*the* many"] for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, and because of the wing of abominations there shall be a desolator"—that is the literal rendering—"even until the consummation, and that determined is poured upon the desolate."

Here plainly is the consummation, and the determined time ends. To the very end the trouble lasts; and that we understand. The "wing of abominations" brings a desolator; so that here is an "abomination of desolation." Sacrifice and oblation being made to cease imply that it has to do with the holy place. Nay, there is a touching link just here with what we have had in Matthew; for the *wing* of abominations brings the desolation: how impossible to forget here the "wing" of which the Lord has spoken, under which Israel had been so often called to find shelter, and which would have so effectually sheltered them!

Put Daniel's prophecy in this way side by side with what we have in Matthew, and their exact agreement will demonstrate that they are made for one another. We see that the "end of the age" is nothing but this broken-off end of Daniel's seventy weeks. We can trace also its connection with the destruction of the city in Luke, though this latter does not itself come into the period. There is unity, in fact, throughout.

The answer to the first question of the disciples is more fully given in Luke than in Matthew, as is plain. We have only here in the first and introductory

2 (4,5): false Christs.

3 (6-8): travail-signs.

4 (9-13): trial and failure.

[2] And Jesus answered and said unto them, See that no one lead you astray. For [n]many shall come in my name, saying, *I* am the Christ, and shall lead astray many.

[3] And ye shall hear of [o]wars and rumors of wars; see that ye be not troubled: for this must needs come to pass, but the end is not yet. For [p]nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be [q]famines [and pestilences *] and [r]earthquakes in divers places; but all these things are the beginning of travail-pains.

[4] Then shall they [s]deliver you up to affliction and kill you, and ye shall be [t]hated of all the nations for my name's sake. And then shall many [u]stumble and deliver one another up, and shall hate one another.

n ver. 24. *cf.* John 5. 43.

o *cf.* Rev. 6. 2-4.

p *cf.* Hag. 2. 22.

q *cf.* Rev. 6. 5, 6.

r *cf.* Rev. 6. 12.

s *cf.* ch. 10. 17, 18.

t *cf.* Rev. 11. 9, 10.

u ch. 10. 21, 22.

* Some omit.

portion of the prophecy the general character of the times, which in some sense would suit the whole period of the Lord's absence. We find nothing however, in this part, necessarily Christian. This comes in afterwards in the appended parables.

[2] The first words of Christ's reply are a warning against the coming of false Christs. It has been said that it cannot be shown that there were any false Christs before the destruction of Jerusalem. But if that cannot be shown, neither can the opposite. There were many antichrists, the apostle John assures us. Among the Jews also leaders of various kinds with various pretensions were continually rising up. Nor are the disciples addressed here individually, but as representatives of others also who should succeed them, and that right down to the time of the end, when the greatest false Christ will appear that the world has ever seen, and when death will be the penalty threatened for resisting his pretensions; but of this it does not need to speak here.

[3] Next the Lord warns of wars and rumors of war, things which have been common enough certainly; as have "famines and pestilences and earthquakes in divers places." He gives them, however, a very significant character, as the beginning of travail-pains: as if nature were pressing on to the birth of a new and better time, and could not rest content or quiet with the present evil. Nor is there anything strained in this, however unintelligent may be the thing which manifests thus its sympathy with the purpose of God: "for we know," says the apostle, "that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. viii. 22). The mind of God cannot but manifest itself through nature, as well as in the movements and convulsions among the nations of the world; and though the specific lessons may have their difficulty, the general one is not hard to read. It is an unrest everywhere which cries for Him who alone has said—who alone could venture to say—"Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." And the cry sounds in His ears, and will find answer.

[4] With all this His people are warned of special trials. The world that crucified their Master will be the same world still. They must look for suffering even to death, the signs of the world's hatred for His name sake, and which will test the reality and measure of loyalty to Him on their part. Many will be stumbled and betray one another. False prophets will find their own in it and be listened to. And the abounding of lawlessness will have its effects even upon the mass in the decline of love. Let them have courage, however, as forewarned. They have but to have patience, and he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

It is manifest that, looking back over the Christian centuries, such things have characterized them throughout. They will end in an apostasy, out of

And many [v]false prophets shall arise and shall lead astray many. And because lawlessness shall be multiplied, the love of the many shall grow [w]cold; but he that hath [z]endured to the end, the same shall be saved.

5 (14): the end and recompense at hand.

[5] And this [y]gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the habitable earth, for a witness unto all the nations; and then shall the end have come.

v *cf.* Rev. 13. 11 with Rev. 19. 20.
w *cf.* 2 Thess. 2. 3, 4.
x *cf.* Heb. 10. 37-39.
y *cf.* ch. 10. 7, 23.
cf. ch. 28. 19, 20.

which there will arise the giant forms of evil which will dominate the earth when the Lord shall have gathered His own out of it to Himself in heaven, and a new work of the Spirit shall begin in Israel, in order that the promises to her may be fulfilled. Those who have discerned the structure of the Apocalypse can be at no loss to discern, after the close of the Church's history as depicted in the epistles to the Asiatic churches (ch. ii., iii.), the united company of the redeemed in heaven (chap. iv.), the Lamb now taking the book of the future into His hands, as the Lion of the tribe of Judah; so that Israel nationally comes now upon the scene, as in the sealed ones of the seventh chapter out of all her tribes. And now as soon as the book begins to be opened, the figures that come forth in answer to the cherubic call are again strikingly similar to what we have in the beginning of the great prophecy before us. Under the first seal the symbol is of foreign conquest; then we have civil war; then famine; then pestilence; then there are under the altar the souls of slaughtered saints; then a great earthquake, whether literal or political or both. And then with the seventh seal, the book is fully opened; and those who have skill to read will find the very prophecies of Daniel to which the Lord presently refers us beginning to be fulfilled, and the half-week of unequaled tribulation again and again brought forward in the following chapters (Rev. vii. 14; xi. 2, 3; xii. 6, 14; xiii. 5).

The closing word of encouragement here also, without denying its applicability to the Lord's people at any time, cannot but be felt to have special reference to this time of trouble, so severe and yet so brief, and with every day of it numbered. They have but to endure for this brief measured time, and deliverance will come for them. How tender a provision for them this numbering of the very days!

[5] And all through it also the testimony of God will go out to the nations. "This gospel of the Kingdom" will be preached, spite of the distress and opposition, "in all the habitable earth for a witness unto all nations." It would not be like God to allow the end to come without warning, and this is especially the character of the gospel then. It is not just what we have as that now, although the gospel of the Kingdom does go out surely now; but if we look at Rev. xiv. 6, 7, which speaks of the same time and thing, we shall find that a special element enters into it then, which with us would be impossible to preach. The angel flying in the midst of heaven, there, has the "everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell upon the earth, and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people." It is expressly called the "*everlasting* gospel," that which has always been the gospel. The gospel of the Kingdom, the announcement of the putting down of evil by the power of God, has been sounding out ever since the promise was given of the victory of the woman's Seed; so that it is truly the everlasting gospel, and yet at the time we are speaking of one thing is said which never could have been said at any other: it marks the exact time of going forth with the most perfect precision: "Fear God and give glory to Him; for the hour of His *judgment* is come." Then this will have come. The eagles will be gathering to the carcase. Judgment will have returned to righteousness. Instead of the shepherd's rod being transformed into a serpent, the shepherd's rod will *smite down* the serpent.

Thus, though with all our hearts we may thank God for the revival of the missionary spirit and work for the last century, we cannot properly apply to this the preaching of the everlasting gospel as we find it in Revelation. And

2 (15-28): The enemy and anti-christ.
1 (15-18): his supremacy.

2. [1] When ye therefore shall see the [z] abomination of desolation spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (he that readeth, let him understand), then let those that are in Judæa [a] flee to the mountains;

z Dan. 9.27. Dan. 12.11. *cf.* Rev. 13. 14-17.
a *cf.* Gen. 19. 15-17. *cf.* Jer. 6.1. *cf.* Jer. 37. 11, 12.

the passage here also, while it may be better applicable to the present time, has yet, we may be sure, its full and final reference to the same period as that in Revelation. The "end" that then comes is that which will complete entirely the period of the seventy weeks, and so bring in the coming of the Son of man.

2. [1] It results from all that has been said, that that which now follows brings us completely to the end of the age, the determined time of God's disciplinary dealings with Israel, in order to bring them into their promised blessing under Christ, when He appears. This, if really the subject, at once sets aside the ordinary interpretations, which apply it to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. The reference to Daniel (ix. 27; xi. 31; xii. 11) renders this impossible. The ninth chapter does indeed foretell the destruction by the Romans, but as distinctly separates it from the abomination of desolation, which comes in the middle of the last week of the seventy. It is in the midst of the week that sacrifice and oblation are made to cease, and this is commonly referred to the Cross as putting an end before God to the legal sacrifices. It is true that it did so, but how does this agree with the coming in of blessing at the *end* of the week, which must be and is allowed to be the end of the seventy? For, take away (as is commonly done) the application to Israel which is so plain in the angel's words, then the making an end of sins and the bringing in of everlasting righteousness must be itself by the Cross, and the Cross must be at the end of the week, and not in the middle. Count one half week of years, three-and-a-half years, after the Cross, and what can be shown as bringing in everlasting righteousness at such a time? But the passage itself most distinctly states the making sacrifice and oblation to cease to be in the midst of the week and not at the end of it. This is an argument which would seem to pass the ingenuity of man to meet.

The setting aside of sacrifice, then, is not by atonement; and the other passages clearly show this. Take chap. xi. 31: "They shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate"; or take the last passage of the three: "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up." In both cases it is clear that the taking away of sacrifice is for or with the setting up of the abomination. In the ninth chapter it should be clear, therefore, why as soon as the former is spoken of, we hear of the latter: "on account of the wing of abominations [there shall be] a desolator," as it reads literally: idolatrous abominations bring the desolation.

Certain it is that the application of the taking away of sacrifice to the Cross cannot be maintained, and that if it could, that of the abomination to the Roman invader of the first century still would be impossible. The abomination of desolation in Daniel is in the last week of Daniel's seventy; and this can only end with Israel's blessing fully come; and that means with the coming of the Son of man. In Matthew it is exactly the same: only a brief period of unequaled tribulation, which Daniel also unmistakably declares (xii. 11), intervenes between the abomination and the coming of the Son of man; and this interval we can now exactly measure as three-and-a-half years. It is the "time, times and a half" of Dan. vii. 25, and xii. 7, and again of Rev. xii. 14. It is the "forty and two months" of Rev. xi. 2, and xiii. 5. It is the "thousand, two hundred and threescore days" of Rev. xi. 3 and xii. 6. So many are the witnesses to what the prophecy in Matthew now before us speaks of.

There is no need of saying much as to other applications. The profanation of the temple by Antiochus Epiphanes, and which ended in the revolt of the Jews

let him that is on the [b]house-top not come down to take away what is in the house; and let not him that is in the field return to take his garment.

[b] *cf.* Is.22.1. *cf.* Lk.9.59-62.

under the Maccabees, while it was doubtless a partial fulfilment of Dan. xi. 31, could not possibly fulfil either of the other passages, and was already a good while past when the Lord uttered this. The "abominations of the papacy," to which others would apply one of the passages in Daniel, are wholly out of question here in Matthew. Thus the application we are making of the Lord's words seems the only one really possible.

In Old Testament times, when truth of heart to the one God of Israel was the foundation of all, the false gods of the heathen were in a special sense the "abominations." Thus Milcom is called the "abomination of the Ammonites" and Chemosh of Moab (1 Kings xi. 5, 7), Ashtoreth of the Zidonians (2 Kings xxiii. 13); and there is no doubt that here (as is generally accepted) the desolating abomination is an idol or a false god. Israel has long been, and was then when the Lord spoke, and according to his own comparison, like a man out of whom this unclean spirit had gone (chap. xii. 43–45); but it is to return in the last days in a still more evil fashion; and a false god or idol in the sanctuary of God itself would be the very trumpet-note of defiance to Israel's Jehovah. In Dan. vii. 25, we find of the last horn of the last beast or kingdom pictured there, and whose "great," that is, haughty "words" shall bring destruction upon the beast (ver. 11), that he shall "speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and *the law* (*R.V.*); and they shall be given into his hand, until a time and times and the dividing of a time." Thus again we find in Rev. xiii., of what is undoubtedly the same evil one, that "there was given to him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and power was given him to continue"—or "do," "practise,"—"forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name and His tabernacle and them that dwell in heaven; and it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them." It is plain by just putting these texts together, that they speak of the same time and power; and we see how it is that the great tribulation of Daniel and of Matthew is brought about.

But in the same chapter of Revelation we are told of a second beast that shall arise along with the former with two horns like a lamb, but speaking like a dragon. He is like Christ, but a devilish imitation—an Antichrist; and as Christ leads men to worship the Father, so "*he* causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast;" and "he doeth great wonders so that he maketh fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell on the earth that they should make an image to the beast . . . and he has power to give *breath*"—not "life" "to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed."

As already said, it needs but to put these scriptures side by side to see how well they fit together. Taken apart, we may apply them to the pope or the Mohammedan power, as many do. Putting them together, the connection with the last half-week of the seventy, and the *shortened* tribulation of the last days, forbids this as an interpretation, which in Matthew is quite impossible. On the other hand, we see how this breathing and speaking image (if we are to take it literally) or whatever it may signify, connects with this closing tribulation, which is indeed the "time of Jacob's trouble," the travail-time of the nation, when they are "born" as "in a day" to God. And here we find the "elect," for whose sake the days are shortened, and who, when the Lord appears are to be gathered together from their long dispersion (Ezek. xxxvii).

2 (19-22): the tribulation.

3 (23-25): signs and wonders.

4 (26): testing.

5 (27, 28): the coming for judgment.

[2] But woe to those that are with child, and to those that give suck in those days! And pray ye that your flight be not in winter, nor upon the sabbath. For then shall be [c] great tribulation such as hath not been since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever shall be; and except those days had been [d] shortened, no flesh should be saved, but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

[3] Then if any one say to you, Behold, here is the Christ, or here, believe it not: for there shall arise [e] false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if it were possible, even the elect. Behold, I have foretold you.

[4] Therefore if they say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth; behold, [he is] in the inner chambers, believe it not.

[5] For, as the [f] lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be. For wherever the [g] carcase is, there shall the eagles be gathered together.

c *cf.* Jer. 30. 5-7. *cf.* Dan. 12. 1. *cf.* Joel 2.2. *cf.* Zech.14. 2, 3. *ctr.* Rev. 3. 10.

d *cf.* Is.65.8, 9. *cf.* Zech.13. 8, 9. *cf.* Is.40.1,2. *cf.* Dan. 9. 27 with Rev. 12. 6-17.

e vers. 5, 11. 2 Thess. 2. 8-10. *cf.* 2 Pet. 2. 1-3. *cf.* Rev. 13. 11-18.

f *cf.* Is. 30.30 with 1 Thess. 5.1-3.

g *cf.* Ezek. 39. 17, 18. *cf.* Rev. 19. 17, 18; Lk. 17. 37.

[2] The notice of the tribulation follows that of the abomination; but we have already sufficiently considered it.

[3] That of the signs and wonders in connection with false Christs and false prophets is also plain. In 2 Thess. ii. we have the same power as the "man of sin," sitting in the temple of God and showing himself that he is God. The connection with Christianity (or rather with apostasy from it) and the thought of the Church as the "temple of God," have combined to lead the mass of interpreters towards Romanism and the pope as the explanation of this also. But how could this be a sign of the day of the Lord being just at hand, when Romanism counts its centuries of despotic sway over men, and that day is not yet come? And again Rome is Babylon the great, the harlot, the *woman* of sin and not the *man* of sin. The dark and evil power to rise up at the end will not even *profess* obedience to Christ, as Rome does. The man of sin is "he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God." . . . "Even he whose coming is according to the work of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that are perishing; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved" (*R. V.*)

All this answers clearly to what we have in Matthew, and goes far beyond Romanism, evil as Romanism surely is. It links with all that we have had before, to certify the meaning of what we have here, a meaning which rather Scripture itself has given us than any interpretation of our own.

[4] They are warned now of any attempt to mislead by drawing away disciples after a Christ come secretly—in the desert, or in the secret chambers. Not so would He come. The power of evil at work would have its snares laid on the right hand and on the left; but there would be no need for any nice discrimination to discern the truth.

[5] He would come openly, not secretly. The need appealing would be such as to call not for secret help but open interposition. His coming would be like the lightning lighting up all the heavens, the announcement of swift and unsparing judgment. Wherever the carcase, the corruption, existed the eagles would find it out: judgment would thoroughly do its work. In long-suffering patience there was no longer hope. Judgment itself was now the only mercy. The shepherd's rod must smite, and destroy the destroyers of the flock and the earth.

3 (29-44): The manifestation. 1 (29-31): to the elect, and their gathering.

3. [1] But immediately after the tribulation of those days, the [h] sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light; and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the [i] sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the land lament; and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall [j] send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from [one] end of the heavens to [the other] end of them.

2 (32-35): the speediness.

[2] Now from the fig-tree learn her parable: when her branch is now tender, and putteth forth its leaves, ye know that summer is near; so also ye, when ye [k] see all these things, know that it is near, at the doors. Verily I say unto you, [l] This generation shall in no wise pass away, till all these things shall come to pass. [m] Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall in no wise pass away.

3 (36-41): a secret told out.

[3] But of that day and hour [n] knoweth no one, no, not the angels of heaven, but the Father only. But as the [o] days of Noah were, so shall the coming of the Son of

[h] *cf.* Is.13.9, 10. *cf.* Ezek.32. 7, 8. *cf.* Joel 2. 10, 31. *cf.* Am. 8.9, 10. *cf.* Rev. 6. 12-14.
[i] *cf.* Dan. 7. 13. *cf.* Rev.1.7. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8.
[j] ch. 13. 41. *cf.* Ps.50.4,5. *ctr.* 1 Thess. 4. 16-18.
[k] ver. 15. *ctr.* 1 Thess. 5. 1-5.
[l] *cf.* ch.12.45. *cf.* ch.23.35, 36.
[m] *cf.* ch.5.18. *cf.* Is. 51. 6.
[n] Acts 1. 7. vers. 42,44. *cf.* Mk. 13. 32.
[o] Gen. 7. 1, etc. *cf.* 1 Pet. 3. 20. *cf.* Amos 6. 3-6.

3. [1] We come therefore now to the appearing of the Lord, ushered in by signs throughout all nature. The sun and moon would fail; the stars fall from heaven. Nature itself would call for a stronger than creature hand to save it from ruin. Then would appear the sign for which men had asked. As Jonah to the Ninevites, so would He be again to them, the Son of man once crucified at their hands, now seen in the clouds of heaven. The sign would be Himself, and what a sign! They "look on Him whom they have pierced,"—not in their minds, not in vision, but really: "every eye shall see Him, and they also who pierced Him," "and then shall all the tribes of the land lament"—the reference to Zechariah (xii. 10–14), both here and in Revelation (i. 7) is, or ought to be, unmistakable—"and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Joseph and His brethren are face to face.

Israel must be now re-gathered: this is the mission of the angels, to gather together His elect from the four winds. It might seem indeed as if the winds had scattered them: how little they think that angel hands shall bring them back! Brief are the words used, but how divine love breathes in them! what will be the joy in these from the far off country gathered home!

[2] "The man will not be at rest," says Naomi to her daughter-in-law, "until he has finished the thing this day." And the Lord now impresses upon His disciples the suddenness with which all this will be accomplished. The fig-tree is once more chosen as a figure of Israel: and "when her branch is new and tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near." The fruit is there as soon as the leaves: thus the development is sudden indeed; summer in this way seems at once to set in: Israel's hopes come thus to sudden fruitage. The very generation that sees the beginning of these things will see the end.*

*So the connection inclines me now to understand ver. 34. That "generation" (γενεά) may be taken as "race," or a people marked by certain moral characteristics, there can be no question at all for any one who has examined the matter: and in this sense I used to take it here, that that unbelieving generation of our Lord's day would continue on to the coming of the Lord itself. And this is, no doubt, true. I think, however, it is not so suited to the connection here as that given above, which is accepted by many. The suddenness of the end is the point insisted on.

man be. For, just as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not till the flood came and took them all away; [p]so shall the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; one shall be [q]taken, and one shall be left; two [women] shall be grinding at the mill; one shall be taken, and one shall be left.

4 (42-44): the world-test.

[4] [r]Watch, therefore, for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Therefore, be ye also [s]ready, for in an hour that ye think not, the Son of man cometh.

p *cf.* 2 Pet. 3. 3–10.
q *cf.* Prov. 14. 32. *cf.* Ps. 101. 5, 6. *cf.* Ps. 37. 10, 11.
r ch. 25. 13. *cf.* Rev. 3. 3.
s ch. 25. 10. *cf.* Rev. 22. 14. Lk. 12. 31-40.

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chaps. xxiv. 45–xxv. 30.)

Separative judgment between true and false in the fellowship of faith—the Church.

1 (45-51): Faithfulness and usurpation of authority.
1 (45-47): the faithful servant.

1. [1] WHO, then, is the [t]faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath set over his household, to give them [their] food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

t Lk. 12. 41-46. 1 Cor. 4. 2.

[3] The Lord adds to this, what makes its suddenness more impressive, that the time in which it would take place was known to none, save only to His Father.* Upon the world all this would come as a surprise, just as the flood did in the days of Noah, judgment suddenly sweeping them to destruction. But at the end it would be separative, selective of its objects: two in the field, one taken and one left, two women at the hand-mill together, one taken and the other left. Here, as in the illustration from the time before the flood, it is *judgment* that "takes away": the one left is left for blessing; for the earth is now being purified, as we have seen, and where the carcase is the eagles are gathered together.

[4] The Lord enjoins upon all to watch, just because they know not the day upon which He may come. For the world, it will be but the unexpected visit of the thief, breaking in upon the house they count their own. But let all be ready.

SUBD. 2.

Here He introduces the parables which show us, by way of appendix to the Jewish aspect, the relation of His coming to the Church, but in a veiled manner. It was, in fact, what as yet they would not be able to enter into. The three parables which follow all remind us that in the Kingdom as committed in His absence to the hands of men, the true and the false would be mingled together, and at His coming only would the evil be purged out. Here we have therefore that separative judgment seen in relationship to what is professedly a fellowship of faith. The three parables have to do with—1st. the use and abuse of authority; 2nd. the Christian expectation of the Lord, the going forth to meet Him; and 3rd. the special deposit committed to each, and the heart towards Him as shown by the way the trust is discharged. We may notice that in all this part we have no reference to Daniel or to Old Testament prophecy any more. All in it belongs to the mysteries of the Kingdom unknown to the prophets of old, and

* A very few ancient MSS. insert "neither the Son"; but Jerome asserts that, while in his day some Latin copies had it, yet in the Greek and especially "in Adamantii et Pierii exemplaribus" it was not found. According to Athanasius also it was alleged at the Council of Nicæa, A. D. 325, that these words were in Mark only. I take this from a note of Dr. Schaff, the American editor in Lange's Commentary on Matthew.

Verily I say unto you, that he will [u]set him over all that he hath.

2 (48-51): the evil servant.

[2] But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My [v]lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and shall eat and drink with the drunken, the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he

u ch. 25. 21. *cf.* Lk. 22. 29, 30.

v *cf.* 2 Pet. 3. 4. *ctr.* Rev. 22. 7. 12, 20. Heb. 10. 37.

which the very form of the parable expresses (chap. xiii. 34, 35). In what is commonly called the "parable" of the sheep and goats which follows, we have what is no longer that, but plain speech enough, the sheep and goats being only used by way of figurative illustration.

1. The coming of the Lord is, throughout these parables, the governing object. He is leaving the world as rejected by it; and it is characterized for the Christian as the place of that rejection. But He leaves it to prepare for His people a place in heaven, and He comes again to introduce them there, where He is. Israel has still the earthly promises; but the Church is a stranger here; for her portion and her heart are with Christ in another scene. In the meanwhile she is the representative of her Lord however upon earth, put in charge of His interests on it, and responsible to serve and glorify Him.

[1] In the first parable here it is of ministry that the Lord speaks, pressing the responsibility of him whom his Lord has set over His household, to give them food in due season. The value He puts upon such service is emphatically declared. Blessed shall he be whom his Lord, when He cometh, shall find doing this in faithfulness and wisdom. He will even set him over all that He has.

It is service, as the same blessed Speaker has taught us not long since, that not only leads on to rule, but qualifies for it: just because all rule with God *is* service. "Love seeketh not her own." To seek one's own is the misery of a fallen creature, and in heaven no such beggar's badge can anywhere be found. Its places of trust are places of service therefore, new ability to serve,—to satisfy love's desire, and pour out of fulness which shall find even there some room for happy overflow, if yet we know little what. Thus, then, the Lord looks at service here as qualifying for service, higher and fuller there—reaping in the same sort as that which has been sown: and that is the law of harvest.

[2] But there is another side which we are to consider: for "if that *evil* servant shall say in his heart, my lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and shall eat and drink with the drunken, the lord of that servant shall come in an hour when he looketh not for him, and shall cut him asunder and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites." Plainly the man *is* a hypocrite: it is no case of ignorance merely as to prophetic teaching; it is what his *heart* says, whether his prophetic views are right or wrong. He, too, like Israel when the Lord came, wants the vineyard for himself, and this he shows by his conduct: he usurps authority over his fellow-servants, and associates himself with loose livers; it does not say that he becomes drunken, but a man is known by the company he keeps; and he is perhaps worse than his company because of the profession he makes. He is a hypocrite, and his doctrine (whether publicly professed or not) comes from his heart, as so much false doctrine does. We are apt to be easily persuaded of that which we want to be true; and so in this case.

Primarily, it is the individual of whom the Lord speaks, but we cannot be aware of the history of the Church without realizing that there is a wider significance; and that along with the decline of the expectation of the Lord's speedy return, and with the coincident assertion of the Church's heirship to Israel's promises, there did in fact ensue that hierarchical transformation of ministry into lordship which culminated at last in papal domination and the necessarily lax manners of the growing world-church. The grain of mustard-seed, enlarged into a tree, sent down its roots proportionately into the earth; and the parable of the transformation soon became its justification also. But this brings the

looketh not for him, and in an hour which he knoweth not, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the [w]hypocrites: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth.

2 (xxv. 1-13): The wise and foolish virgins: faith's expectancy.

2. [1] Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten [z]virgins, who took their [y]lamps and went forth to meet the [z]bridegroom.

[w] *cf.* ch. 25. 3, 11, 12. *cf.* ch. 7. 21-27. *cf.* 1 Cor. 9. 23. *cf.* 2 Pet. 2. 20-22. *ctr.* Jno. 10. 28, 29. [x] *cf.* 2 Cor. 11. 12.

[1] (1): at the beginning.

cf. ch. 13. 20, 21. [y] *cf.* ch. 5. 14-16; *cf.* Phil. 2. 15, 6. [z] *cf.* Ps. 45. 8, 11; *cf.* Is. 62. 4, 5; *cf.* Eph. 5. 25-27 with Rev. 19. 7.

judgment of the world upon the professing church itself: "upon thee goodness, if thou continue in His goodness, otherwise thou also shalt be cut off" (Rom. xi. 22). The true saints being removed to be with their Lord in heaven, there is left upon earth nothing but a decaying carcase, to which the eagles will presently gather. Upon every one so left, the awful doom will come which the Lord announces: "the Lord of that servant shall cut him asunder and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

2. The second parable deals still more directly with the Church's expectancy of Christ, which is indeed the very point of it; the figure of a marriage has been already used by the Lord in a parable of the Kingdom (chap. xxii.) but there neither bridegroom nor bride is actually brought in, although the bridegroom is named as the King's son. The gathering of the guests is there the central feature of the parable; here it is the going forth to meet the bridegroom; and the Bridegroom Himself takes the most important place in it.

The bride is still not seen;* but not surely because the virgins *are* the bride in another aspect, as so many think. This is not more against the unity of thought than it is against the connection, or the orderly development of the revelation. For the heavenly bride has not yet been revealed; and the prophecy as a whole is evidently from the Jewish standpoint, from which the Baptist speaks when he says, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom" (John iii. 23) Israel is the bride, as with the Old Testament prophets, and it is when Christ comes to take Israel into relationship to Himself, that on the way Christians are called out to meet Him and come with Him to the marriage. The very fact of being called out to meet Him shows who they are. Jewish disciples could not be called out to meet Him; and it is a New Testament truth altogether that "when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory."† Thus the bride is Jewish and the virgins are Christian; and if we will remember this, every feature of the parable becomes harmonious.

[1] "Then shall the Kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom."

The connective "then" has certainly a meaning, and as certainly connects this parable with that which has gone before; nay, even with the judgment upon the evil servant. But that will not suffice to make it mean all that interpreters have taken from it. But it is when the end is reached that the "likeness" of the Kingdom to what is here before us will be fully complete. Nevertheless the parable takes us back to the beginning of the Church's history —to the time of first freshness, when the heathen world around was witness not only that they had "turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God," but also "to wait for His Son from heaven, even Jesus, who delivered

* There is, however, a reading "and the bride" at the end of the first verse, which Westcott and Hort insert in their margin, and which Trench (*Notes on the Parables*) approves as to the sense, as conformed to the Jewish customs. Probably it is this conformity that has led to the interpolation, which is certainly opposed to the plain meaning of the parable. The marriage could not have taken place before the virgins are called out to meet the bridegroom.

† In Zechariah (xiv. 5) "the Lord my God shall come, and all the *holy ones* with Thee" does not necessarily imply more than "angels"; and so with Enoch's prophecy which Jude quotes: "The Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints," or "holy ones."

2 (2-4): the difference between them.

3 (5-7): the rousing of the sleepers.

2 And five of them were [a]foolish, and five were [b]wise. For the foolish took their lamps and took no [c]oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

3 Now as the bridegroom [d]tarried, they all grew drowsy and [e]slept. But in the middle of the [f]night,

[a] *cf.* ch. 22. 10. Lk. 12. 20, 21. [b] Deut. 32. 29. chap. 7.24-27. [c] *cf.* Eph. 1. 13.

cf. Acts. 5. 32; *cf.* 1 John 2. 20, 27. [d] *cf.* 2 Pet. 3. 8-10; *cf.* ch. 24. 48. [e] *ctr.* 1 Thess. 1. 9, 10; 1 Thess. 5. 6. [f] *cf.* Ex. 12. 29; *cf.* 2 Thess. 5. 3.

them from the wrath to come" (1 Thess. i. 9, 10). What is referred to here is certainly not the fact of what at last took place when the midnight cry had aroused the sleepers, and when in fact the *unpreparedness* to go forth together immediately manifested itself. As yet the virgins are one, as it would seem, in heart and hope. Afterwards we find the tarrying of the bridegroom, the falling asleep, the startling cry; but not as yet.

The being "virgins" must not be pressed too far, nor yet lost sight of. Hebrew customs are illustrated in it all, even in the number, for "ten lamps or torches were the usual number in marriage processions"; still that does not in the least prevent there being a deeper meaning, for Scripture selects what it can turn to spiritual profit. Thus, though the virgins are not (from the point of view taken here) the bride, or the espoused, yet we are not to refuse the conception naturally attaching to such, of purity, of separation from the world; while the number ten, as well as five, show that this is their responsibility rather than necessarily the reality of their condition. And this comes out clearly in the sequel, though it has been lost sight of by many, in a way that has not only led to misconstruction of the parable but has perverted important truth. The going out to meet the bridegroom is, in the first place and essentially, in desire and expectation of heart, though it results in a positive "going forth" from the world and its associations. A heart in heaven can be fairly measured by the reality of pilgrim- and strangership on earth.

2 A great and fundamental contrast is found to exist between two classes of these virgins: "five of them were foolish and five were wise." And their folly or wisdom is shown in regard to that for which they had come out: "the foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps."

Here naturally the difference between those of whom I have just spoken and other interpreters comes out. We are told that in this parable all are spoken of as "virgins;" while in those that precede and follow it, all are spoken of as "servants." They are therefore all alike true Christians—"Christians with no stain upon the genuineness of their profession, but whose Christianity lacks that maturity of growth, depth of consecration, and perfection of development which can alone entitle to the highest honors and joys of the kingdom." And this is supposed to be shown in the fact that their lack in the case spoken of here "is not of oil in their *lamps*, but of oil in their *vessels with* their lamps" —an extra supply of grace, which the wise virgins carried with them.

A lamp without any oil is, no doubt, a foolish thing enough; too foolish, it might be supposed, for any to think of. Spiritually, however, alas! there is no difficulty at all in the conception of what is seen continually, men satisfied with the form without the power; and this is even the special characteristic of the last days (2 Tim. iii. 1, 5). "The lamps consisted of a round receptacle for pitch or oil for the wick. This was placed in a hollow cup or deep saucer which was fastened by a pointed end into a long wooden pole, on which it was borne aloft." It is distinctly said that the "foolish took their lamps and took *no* oil with them"; but we cannot definitely say whether the "vessels" in which the wise took their oil were just the receptacles on the top of the poles or something separate altogether from the lamps. The foolish have *no* oil, no power of the Spirit to make "a burning and a shining light" for Christ; and this their end demonstrates absolutely.

there came a cry, [g]Behold, the bridegroom: come ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

4 (8, 9): the failure proved.

[4] And the foolish said unto the wise, [h]Give us of your oil: for our lamps are [i]going out. But the wise answered and said, [Nay,] lest there be not enough for us and you: go ye rather to those that [j]sell, and buy for yourselves.

5 (10–13): the result.

[5] And while they were gone away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were [k]ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut.

g *cf.* Rev. 3. 11. *cf.* Jas. 5.8.

h Ps. 49. 7.

i *cf.* Prov. 20. 20.

j *ctr.* Acts 8. 18–23. *cf.* Is. 55. 1.

k ch. 24. 44. *cf.* Col. 1. 12–14.

[3] The bridegroom tarries, and this has its effect upon them all. Wise and foolish alike, they become drowsy and sleep. So in the history of the professing church the expectation of the Lord grew languid and ceased. The expectation of the conversion of the world came in to replace the true Christian hope of being taken out of it, the millennial reign being finally interpreted by the event, of the overthrow of paganism in the Roman empire. After Constantine, but one prominent teacher is known to have favored what was then called "chiliasm"; and he an unsound man.* There was no longer a watcher to disturb the slumberers.

In the middle of the night, however, a cry is heard, "Behold the Bridegroom; come ye out to meet Him;" and this rouses all the virgins. It is more, surely, than a revival of the doctrine of the Lord's coming which is indicated by this: it is a definite announcement, rather, of His being at hand, which is followed so promptly by His actual arrival that there is no time for those who are awakened unprepared to remedy their condition.

[4] *All* are aroused; and then comes the conviction on the part of the foolish, "Our lamps are going out." It is urged therefore that they had been lighted up to this time, and that they must have had oil in them, for this to be; but the parables appeal so constantly to the thoughts and feelings of men, that the argument is an unsafe one. The words are *their cry* only, not necessarily fact at all. And the "ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance" in the well-known fifteenth of Luke, are they in fact such, or in their own thoughts? Surely in their own thoughts only; they are in fact the Pharisees whom the Lord has before Him. So here, it is not necessarily the *fact* that the lamps were ever lit; and the warning is a solemn one, that one may have a good enough light to welcome the Bridegroom, *when He is not there*, and find, when faced with the reality, that the light reckoned on expires at once!

The foolish show their folly by their appeal to the wise. In the spiritual application of these things, none but fools could make it; for while a true soul, with the eyes on the wrong object, might fall almost into despair, yet none surely could expect to borrow from another of the grace that was in him to make a light wherewith to meet the Bridegroom. The wise virgins direct them to those that sell, to buy for themselves; and in fact Scripture exhorts men elsewhere to "buy," though "without money and without price" (Isa. lv. 1). Such "selling" speaks of fixed terms upon which alone the one who seeks may obtain what he desires; and in this way, paradoxical as it may seem, we may buy without money. Nay, the very terms of the gospel are that "the gift of God" cannot be "purchased with money," or with anything that religiously might be its equivalent. The pride that will not take a free gift as such must be sent empty away.

[5] They are too late, these foolish ones; for "while they were gone away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. Afterwards came also the other virgins, say-

* Apollinaris the Younger, bishop of Laodicea (died A. D. 390).

3 (xxv. 14-30): Special trusts, and the heart manifested by them, 1 (14, 15): to each according to capacity.
2 16-18): the contrast.

Afterwards come also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, [l]open to us. But he answered and said, Verily, I say unto you, I know you not. Watch, therefore, for ye [m]know not the day nor the hour.

3. [1] For it is as if a man, going away out of the country, called his own servants, and delivered to them his [n]goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each [o]according to his own ability, and immediately went out of the country.

[2] And he that had received the five talents went and [p]traded with them, and gained other five. In like manner he that [had received] the two gained other two. But he that had received the one, went away and dug in the earth, and [q]hid the money of his lord.

l Lk. 13. 25-30.
m ch. 24. 42.
n Lk. 19.12-27. *cf.* Lk. 15. 12, 13. *cf.* 1Tim.6. 20.
o Rom. 12. 6-8. 1 Cor.12. 28-30. *cf.* Lk. 12. 48.
p cf. 1 Tim. 4. 13-15. *cf.*2 Tim.1. 6. *cf.* Eph. 5. 16. *cf.* 2 Pet. 1. 5-8.
q cf. Prov. 26. 15; *ctr.* 1 Pet. 4. 10; *cf.* 2 Pet. 1. 9-12.

ing, Lord, Lord, open unto us." But they are shut out; shut out, if (as all seems to indicate) it is the earthly marriage, from the earthly joy and blessing, as well as the heavenly; and in any case this is the truth of it. The Lord disowns any knowledge of them; and this He could not do of His own. All that is said of them too sadly agrees with this.*

3. [1] The parable which now follows speaks of the special trusts committed to the servants of the Lord in the time of His absence from them. They are left to care for His interests, and the "talents" are not what is ordinarily taken to be that,—some natural endowment or capacity,—but something added to this, while taking it fully into account: to each one is given "*according to* his own ability." It cannot be further defined than as being like money in different amounts, possibilities of gain for Christ, what in His love to God and man He counts such. The deposit itself increases by wise use of it; the sphere of service grows larger, as we serve; and this is a point insisted on. The five talents grow to ten; the two to four: capacity necessarily growing also by experience, as we know so well. How little in spiritual things are we any of us shut up to mediocrity, as we are prone to imagine, and suffer seriously by the imagination too.

[2] This is presently seen in the conduct of the three depicted here, though it is not, of course, at all a sufficient account of it. Yet it is worthy of note that the man who hides his lord's money in the ground, is not the one who has received five talents, or even the man who has received but two. And we understand well how natural this is, that it should be the receiver of the smallest gift who makes no use of it. It need not be so: the man of splendid natural ability, and who has corresponding opportunities and superadded endowments may be the very one to forfeit all by his neglect or perversion of them. Still the appropriateness and power of exhortation for us in this circumstance of the parable must not be on this account overlooked. It is the little gift which tends to be despised as little; to the great injury of the people and the cause of Christ. For thus the mass of Christians almost drop out of responsibility, drop into inactivity, more or less complete,—practically give up their talent into the hands of those they esteem better qualified than themselves; who, however, cannot do the work thus imposed upon them, and it remains undone; but this is the largest part of all the Church's work! How necessary to remember that "much more they that are feeble are necessary," and to give a right answer to the prophet's question, "Who has despised the day of small things?"

Suppose we have but one talent, every day's believing use of it will carry us on some way towards two. We are not shut up within the limits of God's first

* Alford, Olshausen, and others deny the finality of the judgment here; but Schaff is wrong in asserting that millennarian commentators in general take this view. He should at least own that there are many exceptions.

3 (19-23): the return and realization.

3 Now after a long time, the lord of those servants cometh and [r]reckoneth with them. And he that had received the five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst to me five talents; lo, I have gained other five talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been [s]faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the [t]joy of thy Lord. And he also that received the two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: lo, I have gained other two talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

[r] *cf.* Rom. 14. 10-12. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 10.

[s] *cf.* Lk. 16. 10-12. *cf.* 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.

[t] Ps. 16. 11. *cf.* Heb. 12. 1, 2.

4 (24, 25): the failure.

4 But he also that had received the one talent came, and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a [u]hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not scattered: and, being afraid, I went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, thou hast what is thine.

[u] *cf.* ch. 20. 11, 12. *cf.* Jer. 44. 16-18. *cf.* Mal. 1. 13. *cfr.* 1 Jno. 5. 3.

5 (26-30): the recompense.

5 But his lord answered and said to him, Thou [v]wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I

[v] *cf.* ch. 22. 12, 13. *cf.* ch. 24. 48-50.

gift. We may shut *ourselves* up; and by hiding our talent in the earth, both lose what we have and the capacity for gaining more. For the rule is, "to him that hath"—in the way of increase—"shall more be given; but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away."

3 Another thing becomes manifest in result: that it is not the amount with which we are entrusted that ensures the reward, but the faithfulness shown as to it. The servant who had the five talents has gained five talents; but he who has gained but two has as much doubled his capital as the other has, and is received with the same approval into the joy of his lord. It would be possible for the one with the smaller trust, to win even the higher approbation; and it is something for the Lord to find one of His own willing to serve as cheerfully in a humbler as in a higher position. To a love that "seeketh not her own," all would be equal here, though love itself may "covet earnestly the *best* gifts," these meaning fuller capacity for love's sweet service.

4 As principles all these things apply to every Christian, yet we are not allowed to suppose that the man who hides his lord's money in the absolute way here described is possibly, after all, a Christian. His plea for it here is total unbelief, and expressed in such a way as would be impossible to the stoutest-hearted in the day which is referred to. But the Lord puts into language of the most out-spoken character what the conduct supposed would really mean. Faith would argue as to every gift of God that He who gave it had made no mistake, and that the possession of anything wherewith to serve was sufficient warrant for service; and love would prize the opportunity for this as blessing from the divine Source of blessing. The man before us is a mere accuser of his Lord; but so would He teach us to judge the legal spirit which, even in a believer, would render one incapable of using frankly and fully whatever he is possessed of, in the service of Him who has bestowed it. If we abhor the awful blasphemy which this man utters, let us abhor the unfaithful and cowardly refusal of our responsibilities which means the entertainment (however disguised) of traitorous thoughts like these. "Faith worketh by love"; and love is the free spirit of service. Lack of the one is, therefore, lack of the other; while we may be sure, and for that reason, that no true believer could be found as this man, with his Lord's talent lying entirely unused.

5 Accordingly the judgment here is absolute condemnation. He is condemned

have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered? thou oughtest therefore to have put my money with the [w]bankers, and at my coming I should have received mine own with interest. Take away, therefore, the talent from him, and give it unto him that hath the ten talents. For unto [x]every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And [y]cast out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth.

w *cf.* Eph. 5. 15, 16. *cf.* Gal. 6. 9, 10.

x ch. 13. 12. John 15. 2.

y ch. 8. 12. ch. 22. 13. ch. 24. 51. ver. 46.

out of his own mouth, for if his master were what he thought him, he should have given his money to the bankers, that he might have received his own with interest. He is cast out into the outer darkness, which speaks of the awful darkness, away from God who is light, and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.

SUBD. 3.

Thus Israel and the professing church have been before us in their relation to the coming of the Lord; and now we have the Gentiles similarly,—the judgment of the living nations, when, having come, and His throne established upon the earth, He casts out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and those that work iniquity—a judgment not to be confounded with the final judgment of the "great white throne," which is a judgment of the wicked dead alone.

To those who see in Scripture but one general resurrection of saint and sinner at the last day, with one general judgment in which the righteous will be manifested and separated from the wicked, the scene that the Lord puts before us here seems naturally to picture what is in their own minds. If their view be right, it is, of course, quite clear that it must picture it; and this it is to which we must confine our attention here: does it indeed represent a judgment of all the generations of men, Jew, Christian, heathen, dead and living, at the end of the world? Is this what it states or what it implies? If so, we must heartily and unreservedly accept this, assured that it will be found, of necessity, in conformity with all other scriptures; and that if it plainly declares this, we may accept it even without going further. But it must plainly declare it.

Now the coming of the Son of man in His glory with all His holy angels with Him, we have already seen in its relation to Israel, and to the prophecy of Daniel, to which our Lord Himself directly points us. In Daniel He comes to receive a kingdom which He shares with the "saints of the most high" and which stands for ever; *first of all*, breaking in pieces and consuming the kingdoms of the earth (ii. 34, 35). There surely can be no doubt, except to those entirely prepossessed with other thoughts, that this is a kingdom yet to be set up. To speak of the saints reigning *now* is a thought utterly foreign to Scripture. It is to the overcomer that the Lord promises that he *shall* sit with Him on His throne, even as He also overcame and is set down with His Father upon *His* throne (Rev. iii. 21). Who could sit with Christ upon the Father's throne? And notice He is speaking in this promise as Son of man, walking in that character among the candlesticks (chap. i. 13). If Christians "reign as kings without" the apostles, (who certainly never did) it is a rebuke simply to mention it (1 Cor. iv. 8).

Thus the Kingdom in Daniel is the Kingdom for which still we wait, introduced by that personal and manifest coming in the clouds of heaven of which Matthew (as well as Daniel) speaks, and it is when the Son of man so comes and sits on the throne of His Kingdom that the nations are gathered before Him in the manner spoken of here. There is no hint of resurrection here, and for a good reason. The first resurrection has already taken place *before* His appearing, for *when* He appears, we shall appear with Him in glory (Col. iii. 4). This is

SUBDIVISION 3. (Chap. xxv. 31-46.)
The day of manifestation.

1 (31-40): The righteous.

1 BUT when the Son of man shall [z]come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be [a]gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats. And he shall set the [b]sheep on his right hand, but the [c]goats on his left. Then shall the

z ch. 24. 30, 31. *cf.* Zech. 14. 4, 5. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 7-10. *cf.* Rev. 1. 7. *cf.* Rev. 19. 11-21.
a *ctr.* 2 Cor. 5. 10. *ctr.* Rev. 20. 11-15. *cf.* Jno. 5. 24. *cf.* Ps. 96. 13.
b *cf.* Ezek. 20. 38; *cf.* Ezek. 34. 17, 20; *cf.* Ps. 79. 13; *cf.* John 10. 11, etc. c *cf.* Lev. 16. 5, 7-10; *cf.* Zech. 10. 3.

indeed a truth which Matthew does not reveal to us, though we have seen the living saints called forth to meet the Bridegroom. But it is a thing made known afterwards to Paul "by the word of the Lord," that the dead saints are to join this blessed company and rise to "meet the Lord in the air," together with them (1 Thess. iv. 14-17). Thus it is plain why there is no mention of resurrection *after* He is come, and that there could not be any. The wicked dead are yet in their graves, and will only come forth after the millennium is at an end, to stand before the "great white throne" for judgment (Rev. xx. 5, 11-13). The company gathered before the Son of man when He appears and sets up His throne on earth, is simply of living men who have never died, and of Gentiles only.

The judgment is a *selective* judgment,—the righteous separated from the wicked, the "sheep from the goats." But the saints alive or dead of the present or the past dispensations, will not (as we have seen) stand in such a promiscuous assemblage, to be picked out from the rest by the judgment of their works. The first resurrection will have separated them wholly and for ever. Raised or changed, the saints caught up to meet the Lord in the air will be already in His likeness (1 Cor. xv. 42-44, 52). Give account of themselves they will, and their *works* will be appraised for suited recompense, but *personally* into judgment they cannot come (John v. 24, *R. V.*). Thus it should be absolutely clear that they are not among the mingled company which the King judges here.

But a difficulty arises in the mind immediately—one of those difficulties by which, if fairly met, we are led on to fuller apprehension of the truth itself. It may be naturally asked, if the Lord thus takes away to Himself all the living saints before His appearing, how can there be any "sheep" to put upon His right hand when the Son of man appears? What are they who now are welcomed by the King, as blessed of His Father, to inherit the Kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world?

A similar question, it will be remembered, is asked of John in Revelation (vii. 13) by one of those elders whom he has seen in heaven, sitting upon thrones around the throne of God, and heard singing the song of redemption in the presence of the Lamb (chap. v. 7-10). Here is another company, distinct from these, as also from the 144,000 sealed out of the tribes of Israel, just before seen. They are Gentiles, "out of every nation and tribe and people and tongue," with blood-washed robes and palms in their hands, and the elder asks, "Who are these? and whence do they come?" He asks, and has himself to answer: "These are they who come *out of the great tribulation*"—not simply "out of great tribulation," which might apply very generally to Christians, but out of the tribulation of which Daniel and the Lord in Matthew speak. Thus they are a company precisely defined and limited, and to the very time of the prophecy before us,—a time in which, if we compare the scriptures, Christianity in the true sense of that term is taken from the earth. Once more, Jew and Gentile, even in blessing, form distinct companies; temple-worship is again going on, till the abomination of desolation stands in the holy place; it is in

King say unto those on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the [d]kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was [e]ahungered and ye gave me to eat, I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a [f]stranger and ye took me in; [g]naked and ye clothed me; I was [h]sick, and ye visited me; I was in [i]prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the

cf. Heb. 10. 32, 33. *g cf.* 1 Cor. 4. 11 with Acts 16. 33, 34. *h ctr.* Ezek. 34. 4. *i cf.* Jer. 38. 7-13. *cf.* 2 Tim. 1. 16, 17.

d cf. Lk. 12. 32. *cf.* Rom. 8. 17. *cf.* Zech. 14. 9, 16. *e cf.* Heb. 11. 37, 38. *cf.* ch. 10. 9-15. *f cf.* Acts 16. 15.

short that "end of the (Jewish) age," which is nothing else than the cut-off end of Daniel's seventy weeks,—the last week.

In it we see the "everlasting gospel" going out (Rev. xiv. 6, 7), declaring (gospel as it is) "the hour of God's judgment" to have come; and here the instrumentality used is, no doubt, Jewish. Thus we can understand the special character of the judgment itself which turns entirely upon how men have treated the King in His "brethren," the time being that in which "His brethren," instead of being separate, as while the natural promises and privileges were in abeyance, have returned, as Micah prophesies they will, *unto the children of Israel* (chap. v. 3). Even the apparent ignorance, on the part of the righteous, of the glorious King can in this way be accounted for; because it is only when they look upon Him whom they have pierced that the veil drops completely off Israel's own face (Zech. xii. 10; xiii. 6). No wonder if the Gentiles, turned by their means to God, should not be in advance of the ministry they have received.

Thus there is fullest harmony; and we see that this last week is indeed a seed-time for Israel and the earth. Before it begins, the Lord has called His saints of the past and present up to Himself, and removed the candlestick of Christianity from the earth, spuing out, as in the threat to Laodicea, the mere lukewarm profession. Darkness then covers the earth, and gross darkness the peoples, but the light begins to rise upon Israel, the morning (stormy as it is) of an unending day (Isa. lx. 1 *sq.*).

There needs not much more to be said of this closing part of the Lord's prophecy. For the righteous there is eternal life, death being for them completely abolished. They "*go into* eternal life,"—which is not yet said even of the Christian; and the immensely lengthened life of that time Isaiah witnesses (Isa. lxv. 20–22). On the other hand the wicked go away into eternal punishment—the fire prepared, not for man but "for the devil and his angels." They share the portion of those to whom they have chosen to unite themselves. All Scripture declares, with this passage, that it is strictly eternal.*

I do not know of another scripture which treats definitely of such a sessional judgment of the Gentiles as that which the Lord puts before us in this prophecy. The fiftieth psalm seems about as unique with regard to a similar judgment in Israel, when Jehovah having come and shining in glory out of Zion gathers before Him the covenanted people, and when there are, apparently, as here among the Gentiles, the wicked whom He addresses. Psalm fifty-one follows with a general confession on the part of the nation, who own their guilt in the rejection of Christ (see "Notes"). But the Lord's words in Matthew, in accordance with the character of the New Testament generally, bring in more clearly the eternal consequences.

In general the judgment of the nations when the Lord appears is set before us, as even in Revelation (xix), as a smiting with the sword. In the symbolic language of the Apocalypse, Christ is pictured as a Warrior upon a white horse, whom the "armies in heaven" follow. The beast and the kings of the earth and their army are gathered together to make war with Him that sits upon the horse, and with His army. The beast and false prophet are taken and cast

* See for a full discussion, "Facts and Theories as to a Future State" (Loizeaux Brothers, New York).

righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee ahungered and fed thee; or thirsty and gave thee drink. And when saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? And when saw we thee sick or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the [j] least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

[j] *cf.* ch. 10. 40–42. *cf.* Acts 9. 2, 4, 5.

alive into the lake of fire; while those that follow them are slain with the sword that proceeds out of the mouth of Him who thus manifests Himself as the "King of kings and Lord of lords." Taken with arms in their hands, in open rebellion, there is no need of judicial inquiry in such a case. But, undoubtedly, with the "rest of the dead" (xx. 5) they await the judgment of the "great white throne" for their measured out award. And this marks a wide difference between the *selective* judgment of Matthew and the distributive judgment which closes up the record. That in Matthew, being simply selective, requires but the one point to be raised—for Christ or against? While that of the great white throne, being judgment according to their works, requires the whole life-history to be brought into account. As forming no part of the "first resurrection," the "resurrection of life," all is settled for these as to the company with which they stand: it is of the "few stripes," or the "many" that alone there is question.

An Old Testament prophet confirms with his testimony that of Revelation. "And it shall come to pass in that day," says Isaiah (xxiv. 21–23), "that Jehovah shall punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison; and after many days they shall be visited. Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed: for Jehovah of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously."

Revelation shows us both the punishment of the "host of the high ones on high," as implied in the binding of Satan (xx. 1–3) and casting him into the abyss, and that of the "kings of the earth upon the earth." But the great assize is not then. The millennium intervenes before their "visitation" comes, and final judgment. The Old Testament doctrine is in necessary harmony with the New and with the so-called "premillennial" interpretation of it.

The Old Testament also shows us Gentile nations outside of the empire of the "beast" and his associates,—the "Latin" nations. "Gog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal" is neither in the empire, nor in alliance with it; and the names given and the powers connected, show not obscurely Russia and the *east* (Ezek. xxxviii., xxxix.). Daniel's "King of the north" is as certainly Greek, all through his closing chapters; and his position and might, which is not his own (chap. viii. 24) suggest that his connection is with the colossus at his back. All these are to find Jerusalem "a burdensome stone" to them, and meet their judgment at the day of the appearing of the Lord.

But these are the banded armies, behind which are the nations themselves; and we hear of spared ones sent to them (Isa. lxvi. 19), to declare the glory of the now reigning King to those who as yet have neither heard His fame nor seen His glory. And so His Kingdom still extends, not by a sudden revelation, as we might expect, and divine power alone, but by the aid of human instruments, with an economy of that which at such a time we might think would cease to be held for miracle, instructive to realize.

Christianity, it must be remembered, has entirely passed away. The true saints in Christendom having been taken up to meet the Lord in the air, those that have refused His grace while the day of grace continued, have been given up to strong delusion, to believe the lie of Antichrist (2 Thess. ii. 8–12). These swell the ranks of the followers of the beast and false prophet; and their doom

2 (41–46): The wicked.

2 Then shall he say also to those on the left hand, k Depart from me, ye cursed, into the everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I l was ahungered, and ye gave me not to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they answer, saying, Lord, when saw we thee ahungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily, I say unto you, m Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of these least, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into n eternal punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.

k ch. 7. 23.

l vers. 35–40. *cf.* Am. 6. 6.

m *cf.* Prov. 14. 31. *cf.* Zech. 2. 8.

n Mk. 9. 43–48. 2 Thess. 1. 9. *cf.* Rev. 14. 11. *cf.* Rev. 19. 20. *cf.* Ps. 9. 17.

is fixed (Rev. xiv. 9–11). But the mercy of God still finds its objects, those whom divine wisdom and love may count never to have really had the truth before them, so as to have rejected it, and to these, as well as those outside all profession, the everlasting gospel may bring salvation yet. To the Old Testament prophets Christianity is a thing unknown, and in their writings we must not expect to find it. The book of Revelation it is that adds all this to the Old Testament.

Among the nations outside of the Latin powers, it would seem that the same power of delusion will work in gathering after "false prophets," if not after "false Christs." The Lord warns of these in that day, as if there were more than the one special form of Antichrist which we find in the land of Israel. Satan has usually more than one device, and although never really "divided against himself," can work upon men by deceits of diverse kinds. Thus the Grecian king of the last days,—quite distinct as he is from the more conspicuous form of evil,—is spoken of as a king "of bold countenance, and understanding dark sentences" and who "stands up against the Prince of princes." This is usually taken to be Antiochus, or else Mohammed; but both are negatived as the complete fulfilment by the time specified for the fulfilment by the interpreting angel, "for the vision belongeth to the time of the end," "the end of the indignation"—of God against Israel,—"the appointed time of the end" (Dan. viii. 17, 19, *R. V.*). Such expressions a comparison with what we have had in Matthew should make absolutely clear.

How little we realize what "he that restraineth" (2 Thess. ii. 7, *R. V.*) is keeping back, and the flood-tide of evil ready to roll in, when in righteous compensation for the refusal of God's fullest grace, "he is taken out of the way." It is surely the Spirit of God as now working out His purposes as to the Church, that is the restraining power. He alone is competent for it. But the wearing out of divine patience is already manifesting itself for those that have eyes to see. The fearful "end" is not far off.

It is the "cutting off" of the Gentile church, which the apostle at the beginning distinctly threatened (Rom. xi. 21, 22), and thus the absence of Christianity from the world when Old Testament prophecy resumes its now suspended course of fulfilment, which necessarily baffles every interpreter who does not recognize this. For he must in that case necessarily bring in what he looks for, and apply what relates to Israel wholesale to the Christian church. It must be so: for while the Church is the object of God's favor upon earth, the Jews (nationally) are "enemies for your sake" (Rom. xi. 28). Christianity and Judaism cannot go on together; and the "end of the age," the Lord's prophecy here shows fully to be Jewish. For this to come, the Church, as well as the Holy Spirit indwelling her, must be taken out of the way; and "then" only "shall that wicked one be revealed," who for this reason cannot be the papacy, for it will have

DIVISION 7. (Chaps. xxvi.–xxviii.)

The Completed Purchase.

SUBDIVISION 1. (Chap. xxvi. 1–56).

The Presentation of the Offering.

1 (1–16): Prescient and obedient.
1 (1–5): the counsel of God and the counsel of man.

1. [1] AND it came to pass when Jesus had finished all these words, he said to his disciples, Ye [o] know that after two days cometh the passover, and the Son of man is delivered up to be crucified. Then were gathered together the chief priests and the elders of the people to the court of the high priest who was called Caiaphas, and took [p] counsel together that they might seize Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. But they said, Not during the feast, that there be not a [q] tumult among the people.

o Mk. 14. 1. Lk. 22. 1. John 13. 1.

p Jno.11.47. *cf.* Acts 4. 25-28.

q Mk. 14. 2. *cf.*ch.21.26.

then no *Christian* "temple of God" to "sit in" (2 Thess. ii. 4). Any neglect of landmarks so definite as these must work confusion as to the interpretation of prophecy.

Thus the "everlasting gospel" sent out to the nations (Rev. xiv. 6, 7) is applied without question to the missionary labors of the present day, although we may be thankful to know that the devoted men who give themselves to this blessed work, could scarcely find their Christian evangel in the words of the angel there, and most certainly do *not* say, what is so characteristic of the time to which it really refers, "the hour of His *judgment* is come." They say on the contrary, and rightly, with the apostle, "Now is the *accepted* time; behold now is the day of salvation."

But upon all this here is not the place to enlarge further. We pass on to very different themes from this.

DIV. 7.

The last division of the Gospel brings us to what is common to them all, and without which there would have been no gospel for us, the suffering and death of the Lord; His resurrection afterwards showing its divine efficacy. According to His own language in the parables of the thirteenth chapter, we may well speak of it as the story of the "completed purchase." The thought is characteristic of Matthew, where, as already said, the Cross is seen as the trespass-offering, which is the *restitution*-offering in view of the government of God, the wrong done being estimated and a fifth part added to it, that it may be the full amends which He reckons restitution. Thus the reckoning is the cost of atonement, the purchase-price.

In the parables referred to, the finder of the treasure "buys" the field and the merchant "buys" the pearl. The field is the world, and thus even the teachers of "destructive heresies" are "denying the Master that bought them" (2 Peter ii. 1). These are not redeemed, but they *are* purchased. The Church, Christ's "pearl of price," is both purchased and redeemed. We see again how the character of the trespass-offering suits that of the Royal "Master" whom we find in Matthew.

All through this part, spite of the depth of His humiliation, He shines out as truly Master,—One from whom no one takes His life, but He lays it down of Himself, having "authority," as no other has, to lay down His life, and to take it up again (John x. 18), while doing all in perfect subjection (as in Gethsemane we see Him) to His Father's will. It would be doing Him wrong to say of Him, in any other sense, that He was master of Himself. There was no "self," as with the best and holiest beside, to be master to. There was no division in Him, but perfect harmony throughout. Thus all things moved in

2 (6-16): the discernment of love, and the treachery of the disciple.

2 Now when Jesus was in [r]Bethany, in the house of Simon the [s]leper, there came to him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious [t]ointment, and poured it upon his head, as he sat at table.* But when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, To what purpose is this [u]waste? For this might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. But Jesus, knowing it, said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath done me a good deed: for ye have the poor always with you; but [v]me ye have not always. For in pour-

r Mk. 14. 3. Jno.12.1-8.
s cf.Lk.15.2. cf.Mk.16.9.
t cf. Song 1. 3. cf. Ps. 45.8. cf.Lk. 7.37, 38.
u Jno. 12. 4. cf. Am.8.5.
v Lk. 5. 34, 35. Jno. 16. 28.

*Literally, "as he reclined."

correspondence with Him,—even His enemies working out only that which was His will because the Father's,—stooping to death only to master it and make it serve Him, who could not be holden of it.

SUBD. 1.

We have, first, the Lord delivering Himself up,—not in reality to man, for to man the offering was not, and his part in it was only the consummation of human guilt,—but to God, for the drinking of that cup which only the Father's hand could give Him. Gethsemane is thus the central feature in what is before us here, although all the rest has the cross directly in view, with its consequences whether of trial or of blessing. Now, as we may say, the pledge given at the baptism of John is redeemed; the four days of the lamb being kept up are over; and He keeps the passover with His disciples, celebrating beforehand, in His own assured triumphant way, the fruits of a redemption of which the cost was all His own.

1. [1] He turns from the contemplation of His coming Kingdom to what is immediatedly before Him now, and for which He has been all through preparing and fortifying the hearts of His disciples: "Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is delivered up to be crucified." He sees clearly before Him, and announces the exact time of His suffering, which is not in His enemies' hands, but in His own. And immediately we are told of their coming together, as if His word had given them liberty to act. Yet they act blindly, as blind they are, determining *not* to take Him at the feast, the very time He has marked out as that of His betrayal. He is to suffer at the passover, as the true Passover,—the Substance replacing the shadow; as the resurrection was on the day of the first-fruit sheaf, and the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost.

[2] Next we have, in the strongest and sharpest contrast the love that pours out its precious ointment upon the Lord, and the murmuring of the disciples, prompted, as we are elsewhere told, by one who could sell the Lord Himself for the price of a slave. The last finds its occasion, also, in the first, love rousing and developing its awful opposite in the soul of this unhappy man, whom the defeat of his earthly ambitions and carnal hopes has already set in antagonism. He had begun to compensate himself, as best he could, with the contents of the common bag which carried all the means of subsistence of the little company. That pitiful compensation was coming to an end. Clearer sighted in his unbelief than his companions in their faith, he could understand the intimations, constantly now coming, of his Master's death. The enmity of the leaders of the people was too plain, to need much other prophecy of what was to be. It might not come to that: at the end we find him possessed with the hope that in fact it would not. Still he needed to make his escape from this ruined cause, and carry with him also what he could secure. The price of this ointment might well be coveted by one in such a position, and he breaks out openly with his complaint: "To what purpose is this waste?"

She, too, who has come there with her ointment, has realized as those

ing out this ointment on my body, she did it for my [w]burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this [x]gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her. Then one of the twelve who was called [y]Judas Iscariot went unto the chief priests, and said, What will ye give me, and *I* will deliver him up to you? And they settled with him for thirty pieces of silver. And from that time he sought opportunity to deliver him up.

w *cf.* Mk. 16. 1; *ctr.* ch. 16. 21-23.
x *cf.* 1 Thess. 1. 7, 8. *cf.* Phil. 4. 18.
y Mk. 14. 10, 11. Lk. 22. 3-6. Jno. 13. 3, 27-30.

around Him have not yet, the death that is now drawn so near Him. But the effect is only, if possible, to make Him more absorbingly the object for her heart, and whatever is precious for her goes into death with Him. Her use of the ointment testifies of this, as well as of the fragrance of the death itself, which will abide with us for eternity, and in which we too abide, and shall abide—in the sweet savor of this wonderful obedience.

Even true disciples are caught by the cry of utilitarianism that that which is spent upon Christ alone is "waste," and taken from the poor; and such pleas become for many effectual arguments against what true devotedness to Him demands. Those who would understand and appreciate the laying down of life for His sake, can often not understand the sacrifice of *usefulness* on His account, even though the demand come in the way of duty. They will say, indeed, that duty cannot really demand such sacrifice; but it does very often demand that we leave entirely out of question all consideration of results, and follow simply and without reserve the dictates of the Word. And it is certainly true that the thought of usefulness governs often disastrously even the interpretation of the word of God itself. Results are never really safe as guidance, and this for at least two plain reasons. First, because they must follow the action, and therefore come too late to determine it. And secondly, if it be thought that we can profit by the experience of others, so many things combine to produce them that we are constantly in danger of mistaking the real cause. Of course, if God's word has spoken decisively, even in the least particular, then all pondering of results is mere unfaithfulness.

The Lord openly vindicates the act of the woman. This devotedness shows itself at the right time to refresh His true human heart, afflicted with the treachery of Judas, and now in near prospect of the cross. She had manifested an appreciative love which those around Him were unable even to enter into, and He declares that wherever His gospel shall be preached among men, this deed of her's shall be told for a memorial of her. It may well be, indeed, a corrective of that tendency of utilitarianism to invade the gospel itself, to the great harm and loss of souls; and this is not unapt to be where salvation is made freest, but more a boon to man than a cost to God. Thus Christ is little known, little followed: to have salvation is to have all that the heart craves; yet it is not really satisfied thus, but the world comes in to fill the vacuum.

The dearer Christ is, the dearer souls will be; and His people represent Him for hearts true to Him. But the bland liberality which so often simulates love to the people of God, while it allows His word to be slighted and His rights to be discredited, works to His dishonor and their inevitable loss. To give Christ His due is the only way by which His people can be enriched. Ah, that the savor of the woman's ointment might indeed still fill the house!

But this love and worship bring out the traitor's heart, and the Iscariot, the "trafficker," fearfully earns the surname by which we know him (see p. 119, *notes*). For the price of a slave he agrees with the chief priests His enemies, to deliver up his Lord into their hands, they putting contempt thus upon Him and His betrayer. They know not that they are but moving in the way predicted, and manifesting His sovereignty in their very rejection of it.

2 (17-35): At the passover.
1 (17-19): ordering of the passover.

2. [1] Now on the [z]first [day] of unleavened bread, the disciples came to Jesus, saying, Where wilt thou that we make ready for thee to eat the passover? And he said, Go into the city to such an one, and say unto him, The Teacher saith, My [a]time is near: I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had bidden them; and they made ready the passover.

2 (20-25): the traitor pointed out.

[2] And when the [b]evening was come he sat at table with the twelve disciples. And as they were eating he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall [c]deliver me up. And they were grieved exceedingly, and began to say unto him, each one, [d]Is it I, Lord? And he answered and said, He that [e]dippeth his hand with me into the dish, the same shall deliver me up. The Son of man goeth as it is [f]written of him; but woe to that man by whose means the Son of man is delivered up! [g]Good were it for that man if he had not been born. And Judas, who delivered him up, answered and said, Is it I, [h]Rabbi? He saith unto him, Thou hast said.

[z] Mk. 14.12-16. Lk. 22.7-13.
[a] *cf.* Lk. 9. 51. *cf.* Jno. 8. 20.
[b] Mk. 14. 17-21. Lk. 22. 14-18, 21-23. Jno. 13. 1.
[c] Jno. 6. 70, 71. Jno. 13. 21.
[d] *cf.* Ps. 139. 23, 24 with 1 Cor. 4. 4.
[e] Ps. 41. 9. *cf.* Ps. 55. 12-14. Jno. 13. 18, 26.
[f] Mk. 9. 12. Lk. 24. 44-46.
[g] Jno. 17. 12. Acts 1. 25.
[h] *ctr.* ver. 22; *cf.* ver. 49; *cf.* 1 Cor. 12. 3.

2. [1] We now come to the last passover, the story of which is by all the synoptists very briefly told. It is John alone who, while he scarcely mentions the passover itself, gives the full out-pouring of Christ's heart in connection with it. The ordering of the paschal supper is more briefly given in Matthew than in Mark or Luke, the directions as to finding the man at whose house it is to be prepared being omitted. But it is seen, all through, how fully He is Master of all circumstances, and the disciples, it is evident, are intended to feel this. If He be going down the steep decline to Calvary, it is of His own free choice, and He is still the King who does so. "My time is at hand," seems certainly spoken for the ear of a disciple; and it is natural that to such the Lord should give the privilege of entertaining Him at a time like this. That it is already the first day of unleavened bread is decisive that He did not anticipate the appointed time for the passover, as many have thought. The three synoptists unite in this specification of time, Mark and Luke adding that it was the day when they killed the passover. The statements of John alone are thought to be in contradiction to this, but have been often shown to be not really so; nor is this the place in which to consider them.

[2] The traitor is next pointed out, but by gradual approach, as if to alarm and arouse the conscience to repentance before the guilt was fixed. "One of you shall deliver Me up." Then "he that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish." Slowest of all to respond is Judas with his question, asked with fatal certainty of what would be the answer, yet with the appearance of the same innocence as the rest. But notice, he does not, as they, address Christ as his "Lord." That is ended for him: it is "*Rabbi*, is it I?" "After the sop," says John, "Satan entered into him;" and Satan could not say, "Lord." If there were any struggle in his soul, it is ended now; and in the face of the awful "woe" that he has heard from lips that lie not, he goes away to do determinately what would stamp him as the "son of perdition" through all eternity. Such is the hardening power of sin.

[3] This separation of Judas from the rest takes place before the institution of the memorial feast which follows here; for John tells us that "Judas, having received the sop," went immediately out. Luke inverts the order of this and the last section; but Luke's order is often different from that of time. The

power, save that he laid his hands upon a few infirm persons, and [p] healed them. And [q] he marvelled at their unbelief. And he [r] went round about the villages, teaching.

2 (7-13): the ministry by which His personal testimony is extended.

[2] And he called unto him the twelve, and began to [s] send them out [t] two and two; and gave them [u] authority over the unclean spirits; and he charged them that they should take [v] nothing for the way, save a staff only: no bread, no wallet, no money in their girdle; but be [w] shod with sandals, and not put on two coats. And he said unto them, Wherever ye enter into a house, there abide till ye depart thence. And whatsoever place shall not receive you nor hear you, when ye depart thence, [x] shake off the dust that is under your feet for a witness unto them. And they went out and preached that men should [y] repent. And they cast out many demons, and [z] anointed with oil many infirm, and healed them.

2 (14-29): Opposition to man's lusts and the hatred it awakens.

2. And [a] Herod the king heard [of him], for his name had become known; and he said, John the Baptist is [b] risen from among the dead, and therefore do these powers put forth energy in him. But others said, It is [c] Elias. And others said, It is a prophet, as one of the prophets. But when Herod heard [of him] he said, It is John whom I beheaded: he is risen. For Herod

p *cf.* ch. 7. 24, 25.
q *ctr.* Matt. 8. 10-12. *cf.* Is. 59. 16.
r Matt. 9. 35. Acts 10. 38. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 21.
s Matt. 10. 1, etc. ch. 3. 13. 14. Lk. 9. 1-6. *cf.* Matt. 28. 19, 20.
t *cf.* Deut. 19. 15. *cf.* Jno. 8. 17. *cf.* Rev. 11. 3, 4. *cf.* Eccl. 4. 9-12. *cf.* 2 Tim. 4. 9-11.
u *cf.* Lk. 10. 17-20. *cf.* Acts 16. 16-18. *ctr.* Acts 19. 13 20.
v *cf.* Lk. 22. 35. *cf.* 3 Jno. 5-8. *cf.* 1 Cor. 9. 7-19.
w *cf.* Eph. 6. 15.
x Lk. 10. 10, 11. Acts 13. 51.

Acts 18. 6; *cf.* Acts 28. 24-29. y *cf.* Matt. 4. 17; *ctr.* Acts 13. 38, 39. z *cf.* Jas. 5. 14, 15; *cf.* Acts 1. 8. a Matt. 14. 1-12; Lk. 9. 7-9. b *cf.* Acts 17. 31. c Matt. 16. 14; ch. 8. 28.

exemplification of a common rule, that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country and among his own kindred. Human nature is, alas, consistent enough in evil to warrant such general statements: for "as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man."

In the face of this, as Mark above all emphasizes, the Servant of divine love, able to do little because of an unbelief at which He marveled, patiently did this—"laid His hands on a few infirm persons and healed them"—and seeking yet the way to their hearts, "went round about their villages, teaching." How the perfect manhood of the Lord comes out, and is *meant* to come out, in this account. The divine glory that is His must not obscure the reality of that which appeals so powerfully to us in the tender human fashion in which the Son of God has come down to minister to men.

[2] He sends out now also the twelve, in extension of His personal testimony; two and two, the number of competent witness, and doubtless for mutual help. Mark emphasizes here as elsewhere the power over unclean spirits which is given them, over the dark and dreadful enemy of men, out of whose clutch they have to be rescued. They are sent forth in such a way as shall manifest in all this their absolute dependence upon Himself,—without provision either of food or money. They are to be shod with sandals, not the more luxurious "shoes;" and not to wear two coats. They are to be content also with what accommodation they find in the first house opening its doors to them; while, on the other hand, judgment is denounced on every place that will not receive nor hearken to a testimony accredited by divine power.

With their message, and with this sanction put upon it, they accordingly go forth.

2. We are taken back now to see the death of the Lord's forerunner, in which His own is not obscurely intimated. Herod, indeed, we are told, alarmed by his guilty conscience, when he hears of the miracles wrought by Jesus, sup-

himself had sent forth and [d]laid hold on John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not [e]lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. And [f]Herodias kept it against him, and would have killed him, but could not: for Herod [g]feared John, knowing that he was a righteous man, and holy, and he protected him; and when he heard him he did many things,* and heard him [h]gladly. And when a [i]favorable day was come and Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, and captains of thousands, and the chief men of Galilee, the daughter of the said Herodias came in and [j]danced and pleased Herod and those that were at table with him. And the king said unto the damsel, [k]Ask what thou wilt of me and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went out, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And [l]she said, The head of John the Baptist. And immediately she went in with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me forthwith upon a dish the head of John the Baptist. And the king was exceeding [m]sorry; but for his oaths' sake, and [n]those who sat with [him] at table, he would not break his word with her. And immediately the king sent forth a soldier of the guard and commanded to bring his head. And he went and beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head upon a dish, and gave it to the damsel; and the damsel gave it to her mother. And when his [o]disciples heard [of it], they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

3 (30-45): Divine fulness manifested for the satisfaction of need.

3. And the apostles [p]gather themselves unto Jesus; and they told him all things, whatsoever they had done, and whatsoever they had taught. And he saith unto them, Come ye yourselves [q]apart into a desert place and rest awhile. For there were many coming and going, and they had not leisure even to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

d Lk. 3. 19, 20. *cf.* Jer. 26. 1-15. *cf.* Jer. 32. 2. *cf.* 1 Ki. 22. 8, 27, 28.
e Lev. 18. 16. *cf.* Jer. 1. 7-10.
f *cf.* Prov. 9. 7, 8. *cf.* Prov. 15, 12. *cf.* Amos 5. 10. *ctr.* 2 Sa. 12. 1-14 with Ps. 141. 5.
g *cf.* Acts 24. 24, 25. *cf.* 2 Cor. 7. 10.
h *cf.* Matt. 13. 5, 20. *ctr.* Acts 2. 41.
i *cf.* Gen. 40. 20. *cf.* Matt. 26. 16. *cf.* Dan. 5. 1, 2.
j *cf.* Amos 6. 3-6.
k *cf.* Esth. 5. 3, 6. *cf.* Esth. 7. 2. *ctr.* 1 Jno. 5. 14, 15.
l *cf.* Eccl. 7. 26. *cf.* Gen. 39. 17-20. *cf.* Acts 7. 51-54.
m *cf.* Matt. 27. 3, 4. *cf.* Dan. 4. 27.
n *cf.* Prov. 29. 25.
o *cf.* Jno. 1. 35-37. *cf.* Jno. 3. 29, 30.
p Lk. 9. 10. Matt. 14. 13, 14.
q Matt. 12. 15.

* R. V., following a well supported reading, renders this "was much perplexed." The context however is against this, and good authority gives the reading of the text.

poses him to be the Baptist, risen from the dead. Thereupon the awful story of lust and hate is given us with very little variation from what we have had in Matthew. It completes the rejection which Nazareth has shown us already, wedding the lusts of the flesh in unholy union with the pride of life. It binds together the world and its rulers in opposition to the throne of heaven, and its claims and grace alike. This is the world in which nevertheless God is to be glorified as nowhere else, and to reap a spiritual harvest which shall show forth the exceeding riches of His grace to the principalities and powers in heavenly places.

3. The Lord retires into the wilderness, the type of the world in the condition to which sin has reduced it, in the Old Testament as well as in the New. Here

And many saw them going and knew [them], and ran there together on foot out of all the cities, and outwent them. And he came forth and saw a great multitude, and he had [r]compassion on them because they were as sheep that had no shepherd; and he began to [s]teach them many things. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him and said, The place is desert, and the day is now far spent: [t]send them away that they may go into the country and villages round about, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat. But he answered and said to them, [u]Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread and give them to eat? And he saith unto them, [v]How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. And he commanded them that all should [w]recline in companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds and by fifties. And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he [x]blessed and brake the loaves, and gave to the disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. And they all ate and were [y]filled. And they took up of [z]broken pieces twelve hand-baskets full, and of the fishes. And they that ate of the loaves were five thousand men. And immediately he [a]constrained his disciples to enter into the ship, and to go before him unto the other side to Bethsaida, while he himself sent away the multitude.

r Matt. 9.36–38.
s Lk. 9. 11.
t Matt. 14. 15–21. Lk. 9.12–17. *cf.* Lk. 18. 15, 16. *cf.* Heb. 2. 17, 18.
u *cf.* Matt. 10. 8. John 6. 5–14.
v *cf.* 2 Kings 4. 2. *cf.* 1 Cor. 14. 19.
w ch. 8. 6, etc. *cf.* Ex. 14. 13 with Rom. 4. 5.
x *cf.* Jno. 11. 41, 42, with Ps. 16. 1.
y *cf.* 2 Chro. 31. 10 with Mal. 3. 10. *cf.* Ps. 132. 15.
z *cf.* 2 Ki. 4. 42–40. *cf.* Eph. 3. 20.
a Matt. 14. 22–27. John 6. 15–21.

4 (46-52): Experiences by the way.

4. And when he had dismissed them, he [b]went away into the mountain to pray. And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone upon the land. And seeing them [c]distressed in rowing, for the wind was contrary to them, about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, [d]walking on the sea, and would have passed by them; but they, when

b ch. 1. 35. *cf.* Rom. 8. 34.
c *cf.* Jno. 16. 5, 6, 20, 33. *cf.* Matt. 24. 7–9.
d *cf.* Matt. 24. 30. *cf.* Ps. 77. 19. *cf.* Jas. 5. 8.

disciples' hands minister to the need of the multitude out of their own provision multiplying through His blessing on it. Five loaves and two fishes feed, and more than feed, five thousand men. The application is of the easiest, and made by Christians generally; and we have been through it in Matthew already: the fullness of its blessed meaning is as little to be exhausted, as the loaves were at the time here brought before us. It is one of those scenes, exceptional in the evangelic history, to which its four writers all contribute, while in John the Lord Himself develops from it His teaching as to the bread of life.

4. The passage across the sea of Galilee is also connected with the ministry in the wilderness in three of the Gospels, Luke alone omitting it. In each of these the Lord's walking upon the water is recited, and His coming to the disciples toiling in the contrary wind. The walk of Peter on the water to meet the Lord, characteristic as we have seen it to be in Matthew, is omitted in the other accounts; the numerical change being in harmony with this. The general significance of what is here before us cannot be mistaken. The ascent of Jesus into the mount to pray, leaving His disciples alone upon the sea until His coming again, shows us unmistakably the limits of the trial-time of faith, in which is

they saw him walking on the sea, [e] supposed it was an apparition, and cried out: for they all saw him and were troubled. But immediately he spake with them, and saith unto them, [f] Be of good courage: it is I; be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the ship; and the [g] wind ceased. And they were exceedingly [h] amazed among themselves: for they [i] understood not concerning the loaves, but their heart was hardened.

5 (53–56): The end of the way.

5. And when they had passed over, they [j] came to the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore. And when they were come out of the ship, immediately they [k] knew him, and ran throughout that whole country, and began to carry about on their beds those that were sick, wherever they heard he was. And wherever he entered, into villages or into cities or in the country, they laid the sick in the market-places, and besought him that they might [l] touch if it were but the border of his garment; and as many as touched him were healed.

[e] *cf.* Luke 24. 37.
[f] *cf.* Is. 25. 9. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 7.
[g] *cf.* Matt. 8. 26. Ps. 107. 29. *cf.* Ps. 46. 9–11.
[h] *cf.* ch. 4. 41.
[i] *cf.* ch. 8. 17–21. *cf.* Lk. 24. 25
[j] Matt. 14. 34–36.
[k] *cf.* Jno. 4. 45. *cf.* Luke 8. 40.
[l] *cf.* ch. 5. 27, 28.

experienced the opposition of the "course of this world." No doubt, apart from the great and final interference of the Lord on behalf of His people, there are abundance of lesser fulfilments in which He comes in and ends for a time the storm; and some too in which we do not discern for a time the familiar form, and are afraid; until the Voice says, "It is I;" and we wonder we could have failed for a moment to know it; and the storm for the time is over. And yet, how often do we find, when a new trial comes, that we are scarcely more prepared than before to recognize the One who comes afresh with it; and when He makes Himself known it is scarcely less a wonder.

5. But at last the sea is passed, as when He joins us in the end it will be, and then the blessing comes, even for the earth, when it shall "know," like the men of Gennesaret, the One upon whom all blessing depends, and the blight upon the whole frame of things shall pass, with the spiritual sickness it attends and indicates.

SUBD. 2.

The next subdivision runs still, for the most part, side by side with Matthew. Luke omits it all. We have here in the first place the opposition of traditionalism to the ways of God, and therefore to the true service of man; whereas faith directly connects us with God, discerns and owns His way and is confirmed by Him, as with the Syro-phœnician woman. The healing of the deaf man following this is peculiar to Mark; and in this man's condition spiritually seems more fully imaged to us, with no ear to hear, and therefore speech failing. Here the Lord is specially oppressed by the condition, and His "Ephphatha" is uttered with a sigh. Then in another wilderness scene the divine mercy satisfies once more the poor with bread, which as a figure has been plainly interpreted for us; and with this the present subject ends.

1. The growth of traditionalism is not hard to trace. Truth itself from the source of truth, where ministered by man, necessarily accredits the one who brings it. So far this is well, or it would not be necessary; but how often it follows, and at no long interval, that the teacher comes to accredit the truth which first accredited him. We have gained confidence in the man, and begin to accept with less careful examination whatever comes to us from such a source. The interpreter begins to displace the Word that he interprets. For the next generation this is an easier process, and the rule of the rabbi is soon begun. There is soon (formally or informally) a body of doctrine growing up, which although confessedly human and theoretically fallible, is accepted for truth and attaches to itself the masses. Henceforth he who will learn from

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chaps. vii.–viii. 9.)

The Opposition of Traditionalism and the Service of Love.

1 (vii. 1-23): Human commandments and the divine.

1 (1-8): the rule of the rabbi.

1. [1] AND there were gathered together unto him the Pharisees and certain of the scribes that had come from Jerusalem, and had seen some of his disciples [m] eating bread with defiled, that is, unwashed hands: for the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands diligently, eat not, holding the [n] traditions of the elders; and [coming] from the market-place except they wash* themselves, they eat not; and many other things they have received to hold, the washing* of cups and pots and brazen vessels and couches.† And the Pharisees and the scribes ask him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with defiled hands? And he said unto them, Well did [o] Esaias prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines commandments of men. Leaving the commandment of God, ye hold fast the tradition of men.‡

m cf. Matt. 15. 1-9.

n cf. Col. 2. 8. *cf.* Gal. 1. 14. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 18. *cf.* Col. 2. 20-23.

o Is. 29. 13. Ezek. 33. 31. *cf.* Amos 4. 4, 5. *cf.* Amos 5. 21-27. *cf.* Rom. 2. 17-29.

* Literally, "baptize," "baptism."

† Several good authorities omit "couches."

‡ Many add: "washing of vessels and cups, and many other such like things ye do."

God has to break through a steadily increasing barrier to the end he would attain.

Traditional teaching is ever tending downwards. If it has a creed this will be a conservative element, no doubt, but a dead support at best, not a living principle. Being human, it will have gaps through which error will come in, if not error of its own, which will readily unite with further error. Immediate recourse to God is shut off by it, and the profit of His word "for correction, for reproof" is, at least, limited.

In Israel the scribes arose as a reaction from that departure from the law which had been the nation's ruin. They came forward as its defenders and vindicators, and in order to this its investigators and interpreters. Their zeal for its observance urged them to "make a hedge about it" of their own rules, which, while making it ever a heavier yoke, came naturally by degrees to displace what they were intended to enforce. The human came inevitably into conflict with the divine. As additions to it, they broke the law necessarily from the beginning; and the end could not but be still worse than the beginning.

But worse even than their conflicting ordinances was their total mistake as to the nature of the law itself, and of the disease for which it was the appointed remedy. With all their laborious enquiries as to it, they interpreted it superficially, and had no knowledge of its true working. They had not learned the lesson of experience as the apostle declares it, that "that which was ordained to life" he "found to be unto death." They tried therefore to remedy the failure under it by additional ordinances, instead of turning to that Saviour of whom the prophets with one voice testified. Their remedy was law, not grace; letter and not spirit. They would heal man's deep-seated disease from the outside, and if they suppressed the external signs, only aggravated to a fatal issue the internal disorder.

[1] Mark emphasizes beyond Matthew the religious scrupulosity which dealt with the outside, the ceremonial washings (or "baptisms") of hands, cups,

2 (9-13): the opposition.

2 And he said unto them, Well do ye [p] set aside the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For [q] Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother, and he that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death. But *ye* say, If a man say to his father or his mother, [It is] Corban, that is, a gift, that with which thou mightest have been profited by me, ye no longer [r] suffer him to do aught for his father or his mother: making void the word of God by your tradition which ye have delivered: and many such like things ye do.

3 (14-23): the heart that which defiles.

3 And having called the multitude to him again, he saith unto them, Hearken unto me, all of you, and understand: there is [s] nothing from without the man that entering into him can defile him; but the things which [t] come out from him are the things that defile the man. If any one hath ears to hear, let him hear.* And when he was entered into the house from the multitude, his disciples asked him as to the parable. And he saith unto them, Are ye also so unintelligent? Perceive ye not that any thing that is without, entering into a man, cannot defile him: because it goeth not into his [u] heart, but into his belly, and goeth out into the draught,† purging all foods? And he said, That which goeth forth out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, [v] out of the heart of men, go forth evil thoughts, fornications, murders, thefts, adulteries, covetousness, wickednesses, deceit, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, haughtiness, folly: all these evil things go forth from within, and they defile the man.

2 (vii.24-30): The discernment of faith.

2. And from thence he arose and went away into the [w] borders of Tyre and Sidon; and having entered into a house, he would have no man know it; and he [x] could not be hid. But immediately a woman whose little

p *cf.* Matt. 23. 14-33.

q Ex. 20. 12. Ex. 21. 17. Lev. 20. 9. *cf.* Deut. 21. 18-21.

r *cf.* 1 Tim. 5. 8. *ctr.* Eph. 4. 28.

s Matt. 15. 10-20. *cf.* Rom. 14. 14. *cf.* 1 Tim. 4. 4.

t *cf.* Jer. 17. 9. *cf.* Rom. 3. 10-18.

u *cf.* Prov. 4. 23.

v *cf.* Matt. 12. 34, 35. *cf.* Gen. 6. 5. *cf.* Jas. 3. 10-12. *ctr.* Ps. 45. 1.

w Matt. 15. 21-28.

x *cf.* ch. 2. 1, 2. *cf.* Jno. 4. 4-7.

* Many omit this verse.
† Or "place of refuse."

vessels, couches; tedious in proportion to its vain unprofitableness. God, by Isaiah, had characterized it long since as mere externalism without heart, human commandments claiming divine authority: so essentially hollow that the Lord denounces it as hypocrisy.

2 In fact, what God had commanded was set aside by it; and the breach of the "first commandment with promise" was only an example of many like things which they did.

3 With such it was even vain to argue. The Lord turns, therefore, to the multude to show them the simple underlying principle which justified to the conscience what He said. Nature had provided for the cleansing of impurities as to the body. Moral, spiritual defilement is, alas, from what comes out of the man, from the heart, and is native there. But how then shall the heart be cleansed?

2. For this they are not ready. He turns from them towards the Gentiles as hiding Himself from their unbelief, to find in one herself a Gentile, a conscious need of Him from which He could not hide Himself, and a discernment of faith which Israel's doctors lacked. This Syro-phœnician, content to take her true

daughter had an unclean spirit, having heard of him, came and fell at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile,* a Syro-phenician by race; and she besought him that he would cast out the demon out of her daughter. And he said unto her, Let the [y]children first be filled: for it is not right to take the children's loaf and [z]cast it to the dogs.† But she answered and saith unto him, Yea, Lord; even the dogs† under the table eat of the children's [a]crumbs. And he said unto her, For [b]this saying go thy way: the demon is gone out of thy daughter. And she went away to her house, and found the child [c]laid upon the couch, and the demon gone out.

3(vii.31-37): Man's state fully realized.

3. And again, having left the borders of Tyre, he [d]came through Sidon to the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the borders of Decapolis. And they bring unto him one that was [e]deaf and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to lay his hand upon him. And he took him away [f]apart from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he [g]spat and touched his tongue; and, looking up to heaven, he [h]sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And immediately his [i]ears were opened, and the [j]bond of his tongue was loosed, and he spake aright. And he [k]charged them that they should speak of it to none; but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it. And they were [l]astonished above measure, saying, He hath done [m]all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak.

4(viii.1-9): Wilderness mercy.

4. In those days the multitude being again great, and having [n]nothing to eat, he called to him his disciples

* Literally, "Greek."
† Greek, "little dogs."

y *cf.* Jno. 4. 22. *cf.* Matt. 10. 5, 6. *ctr.* Matt. 8. 11, 12.
z *cf.* Acts 13. 46, 47. *cf.* Col. 1. 27.
a *cf.* ch. 6. 43. *cf.* Rom. 11. 15.
b *cf.* Luke 18. 14.
c *cf.* ch. 5. 15.
d Matt. 15. 29.
e *cf.* Is. 29. 18. *cf.* Is. 35. 5.
f *cf.* ch. 5. 37.
g ch. 8. 23. Jno. 9. 6.
h Jno. 11. 33, 35, 38. *cf.* Lk. 19. 41.
i *cf.* Job 33. 16. *cf.* Job 36. 10, 15, 16.
j *cf.* Is. 32. 4. *cf.* Is. 35. 5, 6. *cf.* Matt. 9. 32, 33.
k ch. 1. 43, 44. ch. 5. 43.
l Luke 5. 26.
m *cf.* Lk. 19. 37, 38. *cf.* Matt. 3. 17. *cf.* Jno. 17. 4.
n Matt. 15. 32-38. *cf.* ch. 6. 34-44.

place as a dog before Him, could find her title in His grace to divine bounty, discerning what was impenetrable to the men of law. This faith on His part He recognizes and rejoices in. The power of Satan is quelled, and the soul satisfied.

3. But Israel had no ear to hear the Voice that spake to them: and this is indeed man's condition naturally, a condition symbolized in this deaf man brought to Christ, and who has a corresponding impediment in his speech: for the speech can only be right where the ear is open. The Lord is oppressed in spirit with this condition. He puts the finger which had touched the leper into his ears: for does not spiritual leprosy underlie such deafness spiritually? and in the cleansing of the leper the ear is the first part anointed. In this type the meaning is quite clear. The soul under the power of sin is deaf to the voice of God—has lost even the power of hearing aright. That which cleanses the leper alone gives the ear to hear.

The Lord touches the tongue also; and then, lifting up His eyes to heaven, sighs and says, Ephphatha! "be opened." Immediately, his ears are opened, and the bond of his tongue loosed. He is here in Decapolis, a part of the land mainly Gentile and heathen, but the fame of this miracle goes far and wide.

4. The crowds follow Him; and the miracle of the loaves is repeated on their behalf. Here again we are in the track of Matthew's Gospel, and the difference

and saith unto them, I have compassion upon the multitude, because they have continued with me now three days, and have nothing to eat; and if I send them away home fasting, they will [o]faint by the way: and some of them are come from far. And his disciples answered him, [p]Whence can one satisfy these with bread here in a desert place? And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground; and taking the seven loaves, he gave thanks and brake, and gave them to his disciples, that they might set them before them; and they did set them before the multitude. And they had a [q]few little fishes; and having blessed them, he commanded these also to be set [before them]. And they ate and were [r]satisfied. And they took up of fragments that remained seven baskets. And there were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

o Matt. 9.36. *cf.* Ps. 107. 4, 5. *cf.* Is.40.30.
p *cf.* Ps. 78. 19, 20. *cf.* 2 Ki. 7. 1, 2.
q *cf.* Ju. 7. 3, 4. *cf.* 2 Chro. 14. 11.
r *ctr.* Lev. 26. 26. *cf.* Ps. 132. 15.

SUBDIVISION 3. (Chaps. viii. 10–ix. 8.)

The Revelation of the Glory of Christ here and hereafter.

1 (viii. 10-21): Leaven.

1. AND immediately he [s]entered into the ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha. And the Pharisees came out and began to dispute with him, seeking of him a [t]sign from heaven, tempting him. And groaning in his spirit, he saith, Why doth this generation seek a sign? Verily, I say unto you, There shall [u]no sign be given to this generation. And he left them, and going aboard again, departed to the other side.

s Matt. 15. 39.
t Matt. 12. 38-40. Matt. 16. 1-4. *cf.* Jno. 6. 30, 31.
u *cf.* Matt. 21. 23-27. *cf.* Lk. 16. 30, 31.

between the two accounts is very slight. The healing of the multitudes, however, which Matthew records, is omitted here, and their glorifying the God of *Israel*. Instead of *five* loaves among *five* thousand men, as on the former occasion, with *twelve* baskets of fragments taken up (see p. 157, *notes*), we have now *seven* loaves with *seven* baskets, and *four* thousand men: the numbers of perfection and of the world at large. They remind us of the perfect sufficiency of divine blessing for all human need, and of all men without restriction being in God's desire participants in it. This fittingly closes what we have had before us.

SUBD. 3.

And now we come to the point at which the Lord, having in opposition to the general unbelief elicited from His disciples their faith in Him as the Christ, forbids them any more to speak of Him as that. The Son of man was to suffer and die and be raised from the dead, and come again in glory. The glory now hidden from the world and manifest to faith alone, will at last be revealed from heaven. But till then His disciples must accept the cross after the pattern of their Master. Here the shrinking of nature is at once evident; and in view of it the transfiguration of the Lord attests that they have followed no cunningly devised fables, confirming the word of prophecy by the display of that coming glory. This is Peter's own interpretation of what took place upon the "holy mount" (2 Peter i. 16–19).

1. We start here with the demand of the Pharisees of a sign from heaven, which shows only their own total and wilful blindness to His true glory. The "sign of the Son of man in heaven" will be seen at last; but too late then for His rejectors. The seeking for new proofs amid the profusion that had been

And they had forgotten to take bread; neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf. And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the [v]leaven of the Pharisees and of the leaven of Herod. And they reasoned with one another, [It is] because we have no bread. And Jesus, knowing it, saith unto them, Why reason ye because ye have no bread? Do ye not [w]yet perceive nor understand? Have ye your heart hardened? Having [x]eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do not ye remember? When I brake the [y]five loaves to the five thousand, how many hand-baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. And when [I brake] the [z]seven to the four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they say unto him, Seven. And he said unto them, Do ye not yet understand?

v Matt. 16. 5–12. *cf.* Lk. 12. 1. *cf.* 1 Cor. 5. 6. *cf.* Gal. 5. 9.

w *cf.* Lk. 24. 25.

x *cf.* Ps. 115. 5, 6, 8.

y ch. 6. 35–44.

z vers. 1–9.

2 (viii. 22–26): Gradual discernment.

2. And they come to Bethsaida; and they bring unto him a [a]blind man, and beseech him that he would touch him. And he took hold of the blind man's hand and brought him [b]outside the village; and having spat upon his eyes, he put his hands upon him, and asked him if he saw anything. And he looked up and said, I behold men: for I see [them] as [c]trees, walking. Then again he laid his hands upon his eyes, and he saw distinctly, and was restored, and saw all things [d]clearly. And he sent him to his house, saying, [e]Neither go into the village, [nor tell it to any in the village].*

a Is. 42. 16, 18.

b *cf.* ch. 7. 33. *cf.* Jno. 9. 35–38.

c *cf.* Acts 18. 24–28. *cf.* Phil. 1. 10.

d *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 9. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 27. *ctr.* Rev. 3. 18.

e ch. 7. 36. ver. 30.

3 (viii. 27–30): Faith manifests itself in the recognition of Christ.

3. And Jesus [f]went out and his disciples into the villages of Cæsarea Philippi. And in the way he asked his dis-

f Matt. 16. 13–20. Lk. 9. 18–21.

* Many omit this last clause.

given was but the seeking of justification for their unbelief; and to such no sign could be effectual: none, therefore, would be given. He leaves them and departs to the other side of the sea.

In fact their self-righteousness had no need of Him and was but a ferment of opposition in their hearts. This is what He presently calls it—"leaven," "ferment": the pride and will of man aroused in rebellion against God; and this characterized them. Elsewhere He stamps it as "hypocrisy": for their minds were made up, and their arguments were but insincere,—the dictates of will, not reason. Alas, in disciples also such leaven might be found: self-righteousness as in the Pharisees, worldliness as in the Herodians. Of this He warns them now, though at first they think but of the bread they have forgotten; and they have forgotten practically the bread that He had blessed!

2. Following this, the blind man at Bethsaida illustrates, as it would seem, the gradual breaking in of light with those who are in His hands for the cure of nature's blindness,—hands that do not cease their work until the cure is complete. The hindrances to it have just been put before us,—self-occupation, the world, the half-sincerity and lack of earnestness in our discipleship, and such like things. No wonder if the Lord must have us alone with Himself for cure, outside of Bethsaida, the "place of nets," which the world truly is. Then comes the touch of His hands; and if the sight produced be indistinct, we must still not deny that it is truly sight. Nor will He leave till it be perfected.

3. We have had the hindrances of faith, and its gradual development amid such hindrances; we now have that in which, where real, it ever manifests it-

ciples, saying unto them, [g]Who do men say that I am? And they told him, saying, John the Baptist; and others, Elias; but others, One of the prophets. And he asked them, But ye, who say ye that I am? Peter answering saith unto him, [h]Thou art the Christ. And he [i]charged them strictly that they should tell no man of him.

4 (viii. 31–38): The path and the failure as to it.

4. And he began to [j]teach them that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake that openly; and Peter took him and began to [k]rebuke him. But he turned, and looking on his disciples, rebuked Peter, and saith, [l]Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou hast not a mind toward the things of God, but toward the things of men. And calling the multitude to him with his disciples, he said unto them, [m]If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and

g *cf.* Matt. 22. 42–46.
h *cf.* 1 Cor. 12. 3. *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 2, 3. *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 1. *cf.* Jno. 1. 49.
i *cf.* Matt. 11. 27. *cf.* ch. 9. 9.
j Matt. 16. 21–23. Lk. 9. 22. *cf.* ch. 9. 31.
k *ctr.* ver. 29. *cf.* John 21. 18, 19 with 2 Pet. 2. 14. 15.
l *cf.* Matt. 4. 10 with Gal. 1. 8, 9.
m Matt. 16. 24–28. Lk. 9. 23–27. Lk. 14. 27. *cf.* Phil. 3. 7–10.

self. It may see men but as trees walking; but it sees Christ and does not confound Him with other men. Those who said He was John the Baptist or Elias did not mean Him any dishonor, but they had not eyes to distinguish the glory of the Christ of God. The Lord tells them that they are not to make Him known as such: for it was now plain that Israel had no welcome for Him; and the Cross was now to be the only expectation that His followers were to entertain. Mark here omits some pregnant words in the confession of Peter, and the announcement both as to the Church and Kingdom with which the Lord answers it. Mark's abridgment of Matthew, if it were that, still follows the distinct purpose of his Gospel, omitting what is dispensational, and simply showing us what distinguishes true faith from all the wisdom or sentiment of man, and carries us on at once to see what man's unbelief involves as to the path of the true believer.

4. He begins therefore now to teach them that the Son of man—speaking of Himself under that title which showed His connection with men at large and His own stooping to all implied in true humanity,—"that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priest and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."

Immediately the very one in whom faith has been foremost becomes foremost in opposition to it. "Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him"! But He turning round, and with His eyes upon them all, on His part rebukes this opposition as of Satan. Satan had before proposed to Him a way to the Kingdom without the Cross; and here amongst His own is the same voice now, exhorting Him to spare Himself. But these were not the purposes of God, but the weak human thoughts which could so easily oppose themselves to God. Not as seeking His own after such a sort could He be man's Saviour; and the path of His disciples also must be after the pattern of His own. He calls the multitude to Him with His disciples, that the conditions of discipleship to Him may be perfectly understood. He that will come after Him must follow on the same road: he must deny himself and take up his cross also, and follow Him.

He contrasts here the two ways, of one of which every one must make choice. To seek one's own is to lose all,—to lose even oneself,* as it is put in Luke (ix. 25), and for ever. To lose one's life for Christ's sake and the gospel's is eternal

* The ambiguity of ψυχή, "soul" or "life," makes a difficulty in translating, not really in understanding, what is here said. Man being a living soul, his soul is often but a synonym for "himself," and so here. There is a present loss of oneself which is only gain, the laying down one's life for Christ's sake; while final loss is irretrievable ruin.

follow me. For [n] whosoever willeth to save his life* shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life* for my sake and the gospel's, shall save it. For [o] what doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?* or what should a man give in exchange for his soul?* For whosoever shall be [p] ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man also be ashamed, when he [q] cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.

5 (ix. 1-8): The end of the way.

5. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that there are some of those standing here who shall not taste of death until they [r] see the kingdom of God come in power.

And after [s] six days Jesus taketh with [him] Peter and James and John, and bringeth them up into a high mountain [t] apart by themselves. And he was [u] transfigured before them; and his garments became shining, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth could whiten them. And there appeared unto them [v] Elias, with [w] Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answering saith unto Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make [z] three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. For he [y] knew not what he should answer, for they were filled with fear. And there came a [z] cloud, overshadowing them; and there came a voice out of the cloud, [a] This is my beloved Son: hear him. And suddenly looking round, they saw [b] no man any longer, but Jesus only with themselves.

* ψυχή, "soul" or "life."

14; *cf.* 2 Ki. 2. 11 with 1 Thess. 4. 17. *x ctr.* ch. 8. 28, 29; *cf.* Phil. 2. 9; *cf.* Heb. 3. 5, 6. *y cf.* Matt. 20. 20-23; *ctr.* Acts 4. 11, 12. *z cf.* Ex. 40. 34; *cf.* Acts 1. 9; *cf.* Rev. 1. 7. *a* ch. 1. 11. *cf.* Jno. 12. 28. *b cf.* Jno. 6. 68; *cf.* Jno. 3. 30; *cf.* Col. 3. 11.

n Lk. 17. 33. Jno. 12. 24-26. *cf.* Rom. 6. 1-7. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 5-11 with Acts 20. 24.
o Ps. 49. 6-8. *cf.* Jas. 5. 1-3.
p Matt. 10. 32, 33. *cf.* Jno. 12. 42, 43. *cf.* Jno. 5. 44. *ctr.* Rom. 1. 16. *cf.* 2 Tim. 1. 7-9. *cf.* Phil. 1. 20, 21.
q Matt. 25. 31, etc. *cf.* Col. 3. 4.
r cf. 2 Pet. 1. 16-18. vers. 2-4.
s Matt. 17. 1-8. Lk. 9. 28-36.
t cf. ch. 7. 33. *cf.* Rev. 1. 9, etc.
u cf. Phil. 2. 9, 10. *cf.* Heb. 2. 9. *cf.* Rev. 1. 13-16.
v cf. Rom. 3. 21, 31. *cf.* Deut. 34. 5, 6 with 1 Thess. 4. 6. *cf.* Rev. 15. 3.
w cf. Mal. 4. 5. *cf.* 1 Ki. 19.

gain. This in the spirit of it applies to all; to-day, as much as at any former time: and a solemn word it is. The confession of Christ still *costs:* that which does not is scarcely to be called confession. "For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man also be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of the Father, with the holy angels."

5. The last words lead on to the transfiguration scene in which that coming of the Son of man is foreshown. We have already considered it in the notes on Matthew, with whose account Mark's is almost identical, except that it is shorter. These repetitions have, doubtless, even as such, their significance; and they differ as being connected with different lines of truth. But we need much more and deeper study to understand such things as these.

SUBD. 4.

We have now the way put before us in its moral features, along with that which experience does not permit us to make marvel of, the contrast of our own ways naturally. Two things are specially insisted on here, the second of which is involved in the first: faith,—which, putting God in His place, puts me in mine; and lowliness, which is just the taking this creature-place before God. As a foundation principle of the path itself we find, what the disciples as yet could not enter into, and in the Gospels could not be much more than hinted

SUBDIVISION 4. (Chap. ix. 9–50.)

God's way for us and our way.

1 (9–13): Foundation principles.

1. AND when they came down from the mountain, he [c]charged them that they should tell no one what they had seen until the Son of man should be [d]risen from among the dead. And they kept that saying, questioning among themselves what the rising from the dead was. And they asked him, saying, Why do the scribes say that [e]Elias must first come? But he said unto them, Elias indeed, coming first, restoreth all things; and how is it written of the Son of man that he should suffer many things, and be set at nought? [f]But I say unto you that Elias is even come, and they have done to him whatsoever they would, as it is written of him.

c Matt. 17. 9-13. *cf.* ch. 8.30.
d ch. 8. 31. Matt.20.19. Matt.26.61. Matt.27.63. *cf.* Acts 2. 32.
e Mal.4.5,6.
f Matt.11.14. Luke 1.17.

2 (14–29): The enemy and the deliverance of faith.

2. And when they came to the disciples, they saw a [g]great multitude round them, and scribes questioning with them. And immediately all the multitude seeing him were [h]astonished, and running to him, saluted him. And he asked them, What question ye with them? And one of the multitude answered him, Teacher, I have brought to thee my son, who hath a [i]dumb spirit; and wheresoever it seizeth him it throweth him down; and he foameth, and gnasheth his teeth, and is withering away; and I spake to thy disciples that they might cast it out; and they [j]could not. But

g Matt. 17. 14-18. Lk. 9. 37-42. *cf.* Rev. 19. 11-21.
h *cf.* ch. 10. 32. *cf.* Ex. 34. 29, 30.
i *cf.* Matt. 12. 22.
j *cf.* ch. 6. 7. *cf.* vers. 28, 29.

at,—resurrection; which is twice declared here as to the Lord Himself, but the application of it to disciples is left for us to make. This part closes with a most solemn affirmation of a day of recompense,—the most emphatic, perhaps, that we find in Scripture.

1. As they come down with Him from the mount of transfiguration, the Lord charges the three who have been admitted to this wondrous sight to say nothing of it to any one until the Son of man is risen from among the dead. At this, though He has already plainly spoken of it, they are perplexed. A rising *from among* the dead is a thing strange to them, though resurrection itself was an accepted truth. This is now the Christian form of it, the Lord Himself being the first-fruits and pattern. No such application is as yet made of it however: only the Son of man is to arise alone on the third day. It is a foundation of our faith that He has done this.

But the disciples have a question they would fain put. How is it that the scribes say that Elias must come before Messiah's day? They know that here is Messiah. The Lord answers that indeed Elias must come first and restore all things. And how is it written, on the other hand, that the Son of man must suffer many things and be set at nought? That did not look like coming after all things were restored. And yet in fact there had been a coming of Elias,—one who had come in such a spirit and power. But that light had gone out: they had done to him according to their will; and so the Son of man would suffer also.

Thus a world contrary, and power in the meantime with it, a path leading down to death, with resurrection as the answer of God beyond: these are the features of the way traveled by the Lord, and upon which His disciples follow Him.

2. The power of Satan has also to be reckoned with; but the enemy here is one already vanquished, and faith only is needed for full deliverance. Faith,

he answered and saith unto them, O [k]unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him to me. And they brought him to him; and [l]when he saw him, immediately the spirit convulsed him; and he fell upon the ground and rolled, foaming. And he asked his father, How long time is it since this came unto him? And he said, From [m]childhood: and oft-times it hath cast him into the fire and into the water to destroy him; but [n]if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us and help us. But Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe:* [o]all things are possible to him that believeth. Immediately the father of the young child cried out† and said, I believe: [p]help thou mine unbelief. Now when Jesus saw that the multitude came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, *I* [q]command thee come out of him, and enter [r]no more into him. And he cried out and convulsed him greatly, and came out. And he became as if dead; so that the mass said, He is dead. But Jesus [s]took him by the hand and raised him, and he stood up. And when he had come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, [t]Why could not *we* cast him out? And he said unto them, [u]This kind cannot go out except by prayer [and fasting].‡

3 (30-32): The Lord's death and resurrection again pressed.

3. And going forth from thence, they went through Galilee; and he would not have any [v]know it: for he taught his disciples and said unto them, The Son of man is [w]delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and when he is killed, after three days, he shall rise again. But they [x]understood not the saying, and were [y]afraid to ask him.

k *cf.* Jno. 4. 48. *cf.* Jno. 14. 12.
l *cf.* Rev.12. 12.
m *cf.* Jno. 9. 1 with Ps. 51. 5.
n *cf.* ch.1.40.
o *cf.* ch. 11. 22, 23. *cf.* Matt. 9. 28, 29.
p *cf.* Eph. 2. 8 with Jno. 6. 44.
q *cf.* ch. 1. 25–27.
r *ctr.* Matt. 12. 43–45. *cf.* Jer. 31. 31–34.
s ch. 5. 41, 42.
t *cf.* Josh. 7. 6–12.
u *cf.* 1 Ki. 18. 42–45. *cf.* Acts13.2.
v ch. 7. 24.
w ch. 8. 31.
x *cf.* Jno.16. 12, 13 with Jno. 2. 22.
y *cf.* ch. 10. 32. *ctr.* Phil. 3. 10.

* Many omit "believe."
† Many add, "with tears."
‡ Some omit.

alas, may be lacking so that power which has been given may not be available. The child brought to the Lord has been already in the hands of those who were expressly authorized to cast out demons; yet they have only shown their incompetency in this case to do anything. It is over these He groans as an unbelieving generation, though still there is a resource in Himself, however much disciples fail. Here, as He says to the father of the child, "all things are possible to him that believeth." Mark emphasizes the malignity of the demon and the long time of possession. After he is gone out, the child seems for the moment dead; but Jesus takes him by the hand and he rises up. To His disciples He says that so virulent a case could yield only to prayer and fasting. But how great is the encouragement in such an enemy so certainly to be vanquished. The demand for faith to be in energy is no abatement of the blessing.

3. Next we have once more the pressing of death and resurrection, possibly in a wider circle than before. There is no comment upon it, except that "they understood not and were afraid to ask Him." How many things we are disposed to shirk after this manner; and in doing so lose, as far as we can, our own best blessings. By and by, this death and resurrection will be the staple of the gospel that they everywhere proclaim; and beyond this still, new glories

4 (33-41): The spirit of meekness.

4. And they [z]came to Capernaum; and having come into the house, he asked them, What were ye reasoning about in the way? But they were silent: for they had been disputing with one another by the way, who should be the [a]greater. And he sat down and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any one will be the [b]first, he shall be last of all and servant of all. And he took a little [c]child and placed it in the midst of them, and having taken it in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall [d]receive one of such little children in my name receiveth me, and whosoever receiveth me receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

John said unto him, Teacher, we saw one [e]casting out demons in thy name, [who followeth not us;]* and we forbade him, because he followeth not [f]us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no one who will do a miracle in my name and be able quickly to speak evil of me: for whosoever is not [g]against us is on our side. For whosoever shall give you a [h]cup of water to drink in my name, because ye are Christ's, verily I say unto you that he shall not lose his reward.

* Many omit.

z Matt. 18. 1-5. Lk. 9. 46-48. Lk. 22. 24-27.
a *cfr.* Phil. 2. 3.
b *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 9.
c *cf.* ch. 10. 13-16. *cf.* 1 Cor. 3. 18, 19. *cf.* Ps. 131.
d Matt. 10. 40. Jno. 13. 20.
e Lk. 9. 49, 50. *cf.* Nu. 11. 26-29. *cf.* Phil. 1. 12-18.
f *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 10-13.
g *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 1-6. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 18, 19. *cf.* Matt. 12. 30.
h Matt. 10. 42. Matt. 25. 40. *cf.* Heb. 6. 10. *cf.* 2 Tim. 1. 16-18.

will develop in it: Christians will learn and rejoice to realize that they are dead and risen with Christ.

This repetition of the announcement of Christ's death may, as I have said, point to that which could not yet be uttered. As a principle of the walk, for us it is of primary importance. To "walk in Christ" involves of necessity the being risen with Him; and this is the only Christian standard.

4. Grace has put us in such a place, and only grace could do it. There is no possible room for the thought of merit in our gaining that which man in innocence could never have pretended to, and which makes our whole life henceforth but a thank-offering for it. Faith is that by which we regain what we had lost in the fall, the place of creature nothingness before God, with the sense also of our guilt in having lost it. Thus there should be for us no claim of greatness any more, while the glorious example before our eyes of One who became for us a servant in His love, self-humbled, poor, emptied of the glory proper to Him, should rid us of all desire of self-exaltation.

Yet, alas, the next thing that we read of after His announcement of the death to which He is going, is an unseemly strife among the disciples as to who should be the greater. The Lord meets it promptly. The desire to be first would only qualify one to be last, and servant of all. Then He takes a little child, young enough to be taken up in the arms, and tells them that He could link His Name with one like that. Nay, here was the type of what He could identify Himself with. He who received one such little child in His Name received Himself, and thus the Father also. Before God indeed, what is the man beyond the babe? Only the happy thing is to recognize it.

John thereupon tells Him, as inviting His judgment on it, how they had found one casting out demons in His Name and had forbidden him as not following them. Here, too, the spirit of meekness had been lacking. They who had but so lately failed (spite of having authority) to cast out a demon, should have known that one who could do so must have some title. Christ's name was not a thing that one could conjure with. There must have been some reverence for that name which could use it as a word of power against Satan. Such an one could not turn quickly round from this to speak evil of Christ. But among

5 (42-50): God's recompense for offences.

5. And whosoever shall [i]cause one of these little ones that believe in me to stumble, it were better for him if a great mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. And if thy [j]hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off; it is better for thee to [k]enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go away into hell,* into the fire [l]unquenchable; [where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.]† And if thy [m]foot cause thee to stumble, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter life lame, than having two feet to be cast into hell, [into the fire unquenchable; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.]† And if thine eye cause thee to stumble, cast it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into the hell of fire, where their [n]worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with [o]fire, [and every [p]sacrifice shall be salted with salt.]† Salt is good; but if the salt have [q]lost its saltness, with what will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have [r]peace with one another.

* Literally, "gehenna."
† Many omit.

i Matt. 18.6. Lk. 17. 1,2. *cf.* Rom. 14. 15-23. *cf.* 1 Cor. 8. 7-13.
j Matt. 5.29, 30. Matt. 18. 8, 9. *cf.* Gal. 2.20 with Col. 3. 5-11.
k Matt. 19. 17. *cf.* 1 Pet. 4. 18.
l *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 8, 9. *cf.* Rev. 19. 20. *cf.* Rev. 20. 10, 14, 15.
m *cf.* Rom. 6. 13, 14.
n *cf.* Lk. 16. 22-26. *cf.* Jer. 8.20.
o *cf.* Matt. 3. 11. *cf.* Lk. 12. 49.
p Lev. 2. 13. Nu. 18. 19. Ezek. 43.24.
q Matt. 5.13. *cf.* Rev. 3.1. *cf.* 2 Tim. 3. 5.
r *cf.* Col. 4. 6. *cf.* Gal. 5. 15.

men there were only opposing ranks: he who was not against was for Him. And he who thought so of Christ's name as to give but a cup of water to one who belonged to Him, should not in any wise lose his reward.

5. The Lord passes from this to speak of recompence upon the other side in the same manner but with more emphasis than in Matthew. Every one must be salted with fire: for "our God is a consuming fire." This jealous holiness by its judgement of the evil would only preserve the good: for, when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. On the other hand, for the wicked the salting with fire applies to the awful judgment of Gehenna, "where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." Here the holiness of God as pure wrath upon sin, eternal as His unchanging nature, unites with the undying worm of a remorseful conscience to torment the sinner. Ah, better surely to give up what may seem necessary as eye or hand or foot, live here in whatever maimed, imperfect way, and enter into life, than, having here the fulness of all good, pass on to the eternal fire!

But "every sacrifice shall be salted with salt:" that which is to be presented to God must answer to His nature; there must be "the salt of the covenant of thy God," as the law puts it, or what must be in all relationship with Him. Salt is the energy of devotedness to God which keeps out corruption: "salt," therefore, "is good," and if it lose its power, what shall replace it? Salt, therefore, we must have in ourselves. It will diffuse its savor round, of course: if it has any, it will surely do so. But this is ministering, not requiring. We must be jealous over ourselves—careful, of course, to maintain this character in all our intercourse with others; but in peace—so easily broken by a legal and exacting spirit: "have peace one with another."

SUBD. 5.

We have now, as again in Matthew, nature in its relation to God, a matter of great moment in the path of service: the institution of marriage, the relationship to Him of children, the state of man in his best naturally, sin having

SUBDIVISION 5. (Chap. x. 1-45.)

Results: Nature in its relation to God.

1 (1-12): The Creator's ordinance governing still: man and wife one flesh.

1. AND rising up from thence he cometh into the [s]borders of Judea, and beyond Jordan; and multitudes come together again unto him, and as he was wont he taught them again. And the [t]Pharisees coming to him asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. But he answered and said unto them, What did [u]Moses command you? And they said, Moses [v]allowed to write a bill of divorce and to put [her] away. But Jesus said to them, In view of your [w]hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment, but from the [x]beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause a man shall [y]leave his father and his mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and the two shall be one flesh: so that they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath united together, let not man put asunder. And in the house again the disciples asked him concerning this. And he saith unto them, [z]Whosoever shall put away his wife and shall marry another committeth adultery against her; and if [a woman] * put away her husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery.

2 (13-16): Children in their relation to the Kingdom.

2. And they [a]brought unto him young children that he might touch them; and his disciples rebuked [those that brought] † them. But when Jesus saw it he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a [b]little child, he shall in no wise enter therein. And he took

s Matt. 19. 1, 2. *cf.* Jno. 10. 40.

t Matt. 19. 3-9.

u *cf.* Lk. 10. 26. *cf.* Matt. 5. 17-20.

v Deut. 24. 1-4. Matt 5. 31.

w *cf.* Rom. 8. 3, 4. *cf.* Heb. 7. 18, 19.

x Gen. 1. 27.

y Gen. 2. 21-25. *cf.* Mal. 2. 14, 15. 1 Cor. 6. 16. *cf.* Eph. 5. 31, 32.

z Lk. 16. 18. *cf.* 1 Cor. 7. 10.

a Matt. 19. 13-15. Lk. 18. 15-17. *cf.* Matt. 21. 15, 16.

b ch. 9. 36.

* Greek, "she."
† Some omit.

thrown its dark shadow over all; finally, we see nature thus deformed working in the servant of God himself and tending to destroy the whole character of service; but then the victory of God over it, and the perfect Servant setting the pattern for His people and moulding them after His own likeness.

As we have gone through this in Matthew, we shall add but little to it here; seeking mainly to note any points of difference, with a conviction at the same time of how slight and superficial our knowledge of these differences is, and how the word of God must suffer from our scanty knowledge of it.

1. In the question as to marriage we are taught by Christ to respect absolutely the Creator's ordinance at the beginning. According to that, man and wife are one flesh, and this is founded on the creative work itself which made them male and female, one man and one woman. God has joined them together: man must not put them asunder. Mark does not even notice the exceptional allowance of divorce, when the marriage tie has in fact been broken through.

2. As to the children, Mark notices the Lord's displeasure at the disciples' conduct, and gives here substantially what in Matthew is found elsewhere, that only those who received the Kingdom of God as a little child could enter therein (Matt. xviii. 3). Mark also shows a fuller answer on the Lord's part to a

them up in his arms, laid his hands on them and blessed them much.

3 (17-22): The heart manifested.

3. And as he went forth into the way, there [c]came one running, and kneeled down to him and asked him, Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? But Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? [d]none is good but one—God. Thou knowest the [e]commandments, Do not commit adultery; do not kill; do not steal; do not bear false witness; defraud not; honor thy father and mother. But he said unto him, Teacher, [f]all these things I have kept from my youth. Now Jesus, looking upon him, [g]loved him, and said unto him, [h]One thing thou lackest: go thy way, [i]sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have [j]treasure in heaven; and come,* follow me. But he was [k]sad at that word, and went away grieved: for he had large possessions.

4 (23-27): Natural impotence.

4. And Jesus looking around, saith to his disciples, How [l]hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answered again and saith unto them, Children, how hard it is [for those that [m]trust in riches]† to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were ex-

* Some add "taking up the cross."
† Some omit.

c Matt. 19. 16-26. Lk. 18. 18-27.
d *cf.* Ps. 16. 2 with Phil. 2. 7.
e *cf.* Lk. 10. 26-28 with Rom. 3. 20.
f *cf.* Phil. 3. 5-11.
g *cf.* Lk. 19. 41, 42. *cf.* Hos. 11. 8.
h *cf.* Lk. 10. 42.
i Matt. 6. 19, 20. Lk. 12. 32-34. *cf.* Acts 2. 45.
j *cf.* Heb. 10. 34. *cf.* Phil. 3. 18-21.
k *ctr.* Acts 20. 24 with Phil. 3. 10-14.
l *cf.* Lk. 6. 24. *cf.* Jas. 5. 1-6. *cf.* 1 Tim. 6. 7-11.
m Job 31. 24. *cf.* Ps. 52. 7. *cf.* 1 Tim. 6. 17-19.

slighter request. He is asked to "touch" them; He takes them up in His arms, puts His hands on them, and blesses them.

3. In the ruler's case which follows, we find the heart manifested of one who is, as Paul says of himself when unconverted, "touching the righteousness which is of the law, blameless." There is really that on account of which it is said, (and in direct connection with his "Teacher, all these things have I kept from my youth,") that "Jesus looking upon him, loved him." There was that in him which was lovable. What he says of himself, he says with an honest conscience and conviction of its truth. Nor is he, as his question shows, merely engrossed with the present and without thought of God. He desires and seeks eternal life; and, attracted by what he hears or sees in Jesus, he comes to Him to learn the way to find this.

Mark emphasizes his running and kneeling to the Lord, his "*Good* Teacher," which from that mere human standpoint the Lord cannot accept. Goodness is in God alone: would that he had sought it only there! Nature is fully judged in the sweep of that assertion; and presently in his aching heart, as he turns, alas, from the One in whom his hope had been, he has to realize at least the bond that (one would fain hope, only for the present) holds him from the blessing that he seeks. But this bond a more than human power must sever. Nature in its fairest form is fallen away from God. Man's need is of a Saviour.

4. This is what the Lord now affirms. To the amazement of His disciples, He declares that it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God. Those who, to make this less absolute than it seems, would apply it to an eastern city gate, should remember that the Lord affirms directly that that of which He is speaking is "to man impossible." On the other hand, Mark records for us the explanation that a rich man stands here for one that *trusts* in riches, which at the same time prevents

ceedingly astonished, saying to one another, And who can be saved? But Jesus, looking on them, saith, With men it is [n]impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible.

5 (28-31): Recompense.

5. Peter began to say to him, [o]Behold, *we* have left all and followed thee. Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no one who hath [p]left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, [or wife,]* or children, or lands, for my sake and for the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in [q]this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with [r]persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. But [s]many first shall be last, and the last first.

6 (32-45): The victory of God.

6. And they were in the way [t]going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus was going on before them; and they were amazed; and as they followed they were afraid. And he took again to him the twelve, and began to tell them the things that were going to happen to him: [u]Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man will be delivered up to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him up to the Gentiles, and they will mock him, and scourge him, and spit on him, and kill him; and after three days he will [v]rise again.

n Lk. 1. 37. *cf.* Rom. 4. 20, 21. *cf.* Lk. 19, 2, etc.

o Matt. 19. 27-30. Lk. 18. 28-30. *cf.* Lk. 5. 27, 28.

p Matt. 10. 37, 38. *cf.* Rom. 8. 17, 18.

q *cf.* 2 Chr. 25. 9. *cf.* 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23.

r *cf.* Phil. 1. 29, 30. *cf.* Jno. 16. 1, 2.

s Matt. 20. 16. Lk. 13. 30.

t Matt. 20. 17-19. Lk. 18. 31-34.

u *cf.* ch. 8. 31. *cf.* ch. 9. 31.

v ch. 9. 9, 10.

* Some omit.

the obvious mistake of a gross literalism, and extends the principle to the poorest in actual possessions. Really he only is in the sense intended "rich," who trusts in riches: and he may do that who never acquires them. In the divinely wrought hunger of soul, the things to which the worldling turns for help become as little valuable as gold to meet desert-thirst.

The disciples in their astonishment say one to another, "Who then can be *saved?*" But salvation is of God wholly. When men have learned their need of this, there is then no difficulty.

5. Nature in itself is then hopeless; and in the child of God still there abides that which because of its tendencies Scripture calls the flesh. "In me, that is in my flesh," says the man in the experience of the seventh of Romans, "dwelleth no good thing," Of the flesh self is the centre; and into the sphere of spiritual things the flesh will intrude, how easily. Self may claim that in which (in the sense in which we are speaking) it can have no part, and take pleasure in the thought of a foremost place there. Peter's "*We* have left all and followed Thee," is just such a claim, which the Lord meets in grace with a full assurance that nothing can be left for His sake without abundant recompense, both here and hereafter. But He guards this doubly from abuse such as the carnal mind might make of it: first, by the reminder that it must be done for His sake to be rewarded: not for self, to gain the reward. Secondly, and springing out of this, "many first shall be last, and the last first," which effectually forbids self-placing anywhere.

6. But we go on beyond this, to see the victory of God over all this spirit of strife and emulation. Again He begins to warn them of His coming death and comfort them with the thought of His speedy resurrection. There is no response: fear has already fallen upon them. But presently it is seen of how contrary a spirit they are by the request of the sons of Zebedee for the two places nearest Himself in the coming Kingdom. The Lord points out to them the way

And [w]James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Teacher, we would that thou shouldest do for us what we may ask of thee. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? And they said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye [z]know not what ye ask: can ye [y]drink the cup that *I* drink, or be baptized with the baptism that *I* am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, The [z]cup that I drink ye shall drink, and with the baptism that I am baptized with shall ye be baptized; but to sit on my right hand or on my left is not mine to give, except to those for whom it hath been [a]prepared.

And when the ten heard it, they began to be much [b]displeased concerning James and John; and Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that those who are accounted to rule over the [c]nations lord it over them, and their great ones use authority over them: but so it is not among you, but whosoever willeth to be [d]great among you, he shall be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you shall be servant of all. For even the [e]Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a [f]ransom for many.

w Matt. 20. 20-28.

x cf. ch. 9. 6. *cf.* Jas. 4. 3. *cf.* Ps. 106. 15.

y cf. Matt. 26. 37-40.

z cf. Jno. 13. 36-38 with Jno. 21. 18, 19. *cf.* Phil. 3. 10. *cf.* Rev. 2. 10.

a cf. Matt. 19. 28. *cf.* 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3.

b Matt. 20. 24. *cf.* Gal. 5. 26.

c cf. Matt. 6. 31, 32.

d cf. ch. 9. 35.

e cf. Lk. 22. 27. *cf.* Jno. 6. 38, 39.

f 1 Tim. 2. 6. *cf.* Is. 53. 11, 12. Tit. 2. 14

by which He reaches this. Can they drink of His cup and be baptized with His baptism? And immediately they assure Him that they can. He tells them that in these they shall in fact partake; but the places that they seek are only His to give to those for whom it is prepared of His Father.

This awakes the indignation of the other disciples, and shows a similar spirit to be in them all. And now He shows them their great and fundamental mistake. Heaven is to be no place for the ambition of men. The Son of man came not to be ministered to but to minister: love's mission among them sought only what love alone could count a recompense. And if, "beyond all controversy, the less is blessed of the better," our dependence on Him insures that this ministry of His to us will go on for ever. If love made Him take it up, love will make Him keep it too, as surely as He is Son of man for ever, although the toil and sorrow of His work be past.

If then with Him service is but the sign of a love unending, and so can never cease, can it be different with those whom He is bringing into the glory of likeness to Himself? Can they take up service to win lordship by it, and state and authority? That were surely impossible: nay, the greatest in heaven's Kingdom is he that humbleth himself as a little child (Matt. xviii. 4). In heaven's rule, Love rules; and therefore rule is service still, most valued because it is so.

Div. 3.

The closing division of the book shows us the Lord's service perfected in His sacrificial death, the acceptance of which is seen in resurrection. But Mark goes beyond this, and further than any of the Gospels, following Him into heaven itself,—to the right hand of God. The connection of this with the sin-offering aspect of the atoning work, as here presented to us, we must consider at another time.

The Cross and the resurrection give us characteristically the second and third

DIVISION 3. (Chaps. x. 46–xvi.)

The Heart of Service revealed in Sacrifice, answered from the Heart of God in Resurrection and the Ascension to Heaven of the Offerer.

SUBDIVISION 1. (Chaps. x. 46–xiii.)

The King.

1 (x. 46-xi. 26): The barren tree.
1 (x. 46-52): Ilgbt.

1. [1] AND they come to [g] Jericho; and as he went out of Jericho, and his disciples, and a great multitude, the son of Timæus, Bartimæus, a blind man, sat by the wayside, [h] begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out and say, [i] Son of David, Jesus, have mercy on me. And many [j] re-

[g] Matt. 20. 29-34. Lk. 18. 35-43.
[h] *cf.* Jno. 9. 1. *cf.* Acts 3. 2. *cf.* Lk. 7. 42.
[i] *cf.* Matt. 15. 22. *cf.* Matt. 21. 9 with Jno. 1. 49.
[j] *cf.* ver. 13.

subdivisions here. The first, as introductory to these, takes us back (as at this point do all the Gospels) to Matthew's view of the King, come to His own and rejected by them; the connection of which with what follows it is plain, when we realize that in this not only Israel's condition but that of the world as a whole is seen, the sin of man in its full development, for which the cross of Christ is the only possible remedy. Thus the three parts of this last division are in fit relation to one another, and form a significant whole.

SUBD. 1.

The first subdivision has also its three parts. The first of these has its central significance in the barren fig-tree, which the Lord curses for its barrenness, a figure scarcely to be mistaken by any who look below the surface, and which in Mark is woven together with the story of His purification of the temple, His Father's house. Israel, alas, for this had to be driven out of that which they had profaned. The "Canaanite (or merchantman) in the house of the Lord" had found in the favored people of God its sorrowful fulfilment.

The second part shows us, along with their hostility to the Lord, His judgment in detail of their condition. This comes out in His answers to their various and evil-designing questions and efforts to entangle Him in His talk,—efforts which end for them in disastrous confusion. He closes it with His unanswerable question to them with regard to David's Son, and then denounces to the people the heartless and ostentations religiousness of the scribes.

The third part announces (for disciples' ears alone) the coming of the rejected Son of man in glory, to deliver His believing people out of the great final tribulation into which the nation has come because, rejecting Him who came to them in His Father's name, they have received him who comes in his own.

The connection all through, as generally in Mark, is close and intimate with Matthew's Gospel; Mark, however, omitting much, especially of the dispensational details, as the marriage of the King's son, and in the prophecy of the final scenes, all that has reference to the Church and to the judgment of the nations, the separation of the sheep from the goats.

1. [1] In the three synoptic Gospels alike, the Lord's presentation of Himself to the people as their King is prefaced by the miracle at Jericho, which is expressly wrought in answer to an appeal to Him as Son of David. Matthew mentions two blind men, but Mark only one, whose name he (and not Matthew) gives. Bartimæus is simply the son of Timæus. so that he gets his personal name from his relationship. Timæus is in Greek,* "one that is prized," and "the son of

* A Greek name need scarcely be a difficulty, where Greek had been almost the common language for so many years, and where Peter, Andrew, Philip, Nicodemus, Stephen, are all Greek. Its being Greek (the common synonym of Gentile) is in fact spiritually significant, Israel's father Abraham, God's Timæus, having been called in uncircumcision, according to the apostle's argument in Rom. iv.

buked him that he should be silent; but he cried so much the [k]more, Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still and said, Call him. And they called the blind man, saying to him, Be of good courage, rise, he calleth thee. And he, [l]casting away his garment, sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What [m]wilt thou that I should do for thee? And the blind man said unto him, [n]Rabboni, that I may recover sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go [o]thy way: thy faith hath healed thee. And immediately he recovered sight, and [p]followed him in the way.

2 (xi. 1-11): the announcement.

2 And when they [q]come near to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go into the village that is over against you, and immediately upon entering it ye shall find a colt tied, [r]whereon no man ever yet sat: loose it and bring [it]. And if any one say unto you, Why do ye this? say, The Lord hath [s]need of him, and immediately he will send it hither. And they departed, and found a colt tied at the door without, at the way round [the house], and they loose him. And some of those standing there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt? And

k *cf.* Lk. 5. 19.

l *cf.* Is. 64. 6 with Phil. 3. 7-9.

m *cf.* Jno. 5. 6, 40.

n Jno. 20. 6.

o *cf.* Jno. 11. 44 with Rom. 8. 2.

p *cf.* ch. 1. 18 with Rom. 6. 12, 13.

q Matt. 21. 1-11. Lk. 19. 29-40. Jno. 12. 12-16.

r *cf.* Jer. 31. 18. *cf.* Job 11. 12.

s *cf.* Acts 9. 13-16.

one that is prized" would well represent the state of Israel in her blindness of unbelief still "beloved for the fathers' sakes" (Rom. xi. 28). It is surely a striking name for one whom we have already looked at as on other grounds (see notes on Matt. xx. 29–34) foreshadowing the remnant of Israel in days to come, when God is preparing the way of His King to come to Zion. They need and will find, spite of the opposition of the mass by whom they are surrounded, in Jesus of Nazareth, One who is sent to "preach recovering of sight to the blind" (Luke iv. 18). To Him they will come, "casting away the garment" of religious self-righteousness, which has been ever the hindrance with the people to whom they belong. They will receive sight and follow Jesus.

Such spiritual sight given in Jericho, the world under the curse, into which Christ has come, and which still converts blind beggars into joyful followers of the Lord, is even now His witness. He had to come under this curse to redeem us from it, and the deliverance at Jericho, may well be the pledge of His victory at Jerusalem and elsewhere, though He go to present rejection at the hands of men. The blessed Servant has anticipated it all, and sees with no uncertainty the path before Him. That very rejection shall only give Him occasion for deeper service.

2 So they come near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage (the "house of unripe figs") and Bethany (the "house of affliction" or "humiliation")* significant names both for *Him;* and now He sends two of His disciples to bring to Him the colt upon which He is to ride, proclaiming His Kingdom of peace, into Jerusalem. Mark, as little as possible touching the dispensational side of things, omits from his account the mother ass (*see Matthew*). The acclamations of the multitude hail the "coming kingdom of our father David." There seems at present no opposition. He simply enters Jerusalem, goes into the temple and looks round upon all things there. Then, it being now evening, He withdraws and goes out to Bethany.

Matthew does not notice this first visit of silent contemplation on the Lord's

* More generally taken now as "house of dates," but quite conjecturally.

they said unto them even as Jesus had said; and they let them go. And they bring the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him, and he sat upon him. And many [r]spread their garments in the way; and others branches which they had cut out of the fields. And those who went before, and those who followed cried, Hosanna! [u]blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest! And he entered into Jerusalem, into the [v]temple; and having looked round upon all things, it being already evening, he [w]went out to Bethany with the twelve.

[3] (xi. 12-26): the ban upon the fig-tree and the cleansing of the house of God.

[3] And on the [x]morrow, as they came out from Bethany, he hungered. And seeing a [y]fig-tree afar off, having [z]leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon; and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the [a]time of figs was not yet. And he answered and said to it, Let [b]none eat fruit of thee any more for ever. And his disciples heard it.

And they come to Jerusalem; and, entering into the temple, he began to [c]cast out the sellers and the buyers in the temple; and he overthrew the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those that sold doves; and would not suffer any one to carry a vessel through the temple. And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, [d]My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations? but ye have made it a [e]den of robbers.

t cf. ch. 10. 50. *cf.* Lk.7.38.
u Ps. 118.26. Zech. 9. 9.
v cf. Lk. 2. 46. *cf.* Jno. 18. 20.
w cf. Lk. 2. 7 with Jno. 1. 10, 11. Matt.21.17.
x Matt. 21. 18-22.
y cf. Lk. 13. 6-10.
z cf. Gen.3.7. *cf.* Ezek.17. 9. *cf.* Is. 1. 30. *cfr.* Ps. 1. 2, 3.
a cf. Lk. 19. 44.
b Matt. 23. 37-39.
c Matt. 21. 12, 13. Lk. 19. 45, 46. *cf.* Jno2.13-16. *cf.* Mal. 3. 1-6.
d Is. 56. 7. *cf.* Mi. 4. 2.
e Jer. 7. 11. *cf.* Is. 5. 7.

part, but puts the cleansing of the temple, which did not really take place till the next day, in connection with the triumphal entry. This has of course been charged upon him as a discrepancy. It is in fact the substitution of an order of thought for the order of time; and this is not infrequent in the Gospels.

This simple looking round upon everything and then turning the back upon it is very solemn. It is not judgment that is inflicted, but He finds nothing to His satisfaction, and leaves it to them, and leaves them with it. His own personal position is outside it all. The temple as His Father's house should have been His own. There, if anywhere in Israel, would have been the throne of God, and here was the King of this kingdom, the Son of the Father; and He turns His back on it. Leaving it, He leaves the city also, for Bethany, the "house of humiliation." He can only abide there.

[3] On the morrow, as He returns to the city, He hungers. A spiritual hunger was, in fact, upon Him. The zeal of His Father's house was consuming Him, with all that that house implied, as established among men—a place of approach to Him, not for Israel only, but for all nations. This had been committed to Israel's care, and their privileges upon which they prided themselves, only to look down with disdain upon the Gentiles, were really responsibilities on their behalf. The blessing of the earth depended—and still depends—upon Israel's blessing. As God's vine they had failed, and the vineyard had been laid waste; but He had suffered a remnant to come back, according to His own figure as to them, to be as "a fig-tree planted in" the desolate "vineyard" (Luke xiii. 6), to see if yet there might be fruit for Him.

Here, then, the significance of the present act is seen. The returned people stood before God with its profession of faith in Him, in striking contrast with the nations round, for whom plainly as merely heathen, "the time of figs was not yet." The fig-leaf was the promise of fruit wherever found; and therefore

And the chief priests and the scribes heard it, and [f]sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the multitude were [g]astonished at his doctrine. And when evening was come he went out [h]without the city.

And passing by, early in the morning, they saw the [i]fig-tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Rabbi, behold, the fig-tree which thou cursedst is dried up. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. Verily I say unto you that [j]whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou plucked up and cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith is coming to pass, it shall be [so] to him. Wherefore I say unto you, Whatsoever things ye [k]pray and ask for, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, [l]forgive, if ye have aught against any, that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your offences. [But if *ye* do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your offences.*]

[f] Matt. 21. 45, 46. Lk. 19. 47, 48.
[g] ch. 1. 22, etc.
[h] ver. 11.
[i] *cf.* Lk. 23. 31. *ctr.* Ezek. 37. 11, 12.
[j] Matt. 17. 20. Lk. 17. 6. *cf.* Zech. 4. 7.
[k] Jno. 14. 13, 14. Jno. 15. 7. *cf.* Jno. 4. 50.
[l] Matt. 6. 14. *cf.* Matt. 18. 23–35.

* Omitted by some, and doubtful.

the Lord comes to it to find this. There was none: and for this He pronounces its doom.

No more is said about this here, but He goes on to Jerusalem and the temple, and what He had found at the beginning of His ministry (John ii. 13–16) He finds unchanged at the end of it. Greed was profaning the very house of God, and that which should have been a house of prayer had become a den of robbers. He purges them all out, assuming for a moment the authority which was His; but the effect is only to bring the chief priests and scribes together to plot for His destruction. As yet the fear of the people holds them back.

We return then to the actual destruction of the fig-tree, which they find next morning dried up from the roots. The Lord uses it to impress upon His disciples the power of faith in God. Not a tree merely, but a mountain would disappear in this way from the path of faith, where faith laid hold of the Invisible for it. But He joins with believing prayer the need of a tender spirit of forgiveness towards any against whom the heart might retain the sense of wrong, lest the Father's government should be made to remember one's own offences.

The Lord leaves the application both of the fig-tree and the mountain to be made by His disciples. They were evidently not yet prepared to realize the doom that Israel as a nation were bringing upon themselves, or that they might be such an obstruction as He pictured to the path of faith. The divine foresight of the end would not prevent the most assiduous tenderness in warning and entreaty till the end should come. God has taken care even to proclaim by the mouth of Jeremiah that His own prophecies of coming judgment might be set aside by a nation's repentance (Jer. xviii. 7, 8); and has even given us in Nineveh an example of this (Jonah iii. 10).

But Israel went on unrepenting until it was in fact, as a nation, sunk like the mountain of which the Lord speaks into the sea of nations round her; and the fig-tree died withered up because it had no fruit for Him who sought it. The blessing of which the Word still gives assurance for them can only be through a veritable resurrection (Ezek. xxxvii).

2. The next section is almost entirely similar to Matthew, save in the omission of two parables, and in the addition by Mark of the beautiful and signifi-

2 (xi. 27–xii.): Rejected and rejecting: the discriminative judgment.
1 (xii.-27–33): the question of authority.

2. [1] And they come again to Jerusalem; and, as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders; and they said unto him, By what [m]authority doest thou these things, and who gave thee this authority that thou shouldst do these things? And Jesus said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. The [n]baptism of John, was it from heaven or of men? answer me. And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven, he will say, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men—they feared the people: for all held John to be truly a prophet. And they answered and said to Jesus, We [o]know not. And Jesus saith unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

2 (xii.1–12): the rejection of the messengers.

[2] And he began to speak unto them in parables. A [p]man planted a vineyard, and set a [q]hedge about it, and digged a pit for the winepress, and built a tower, and let it out to [r]husbandmen, and went out of the country. And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the [s]fruit of the vineyard. And they took him, and beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they [threw stones and] * struck him on the head, and sent him away with insult. And he sent another; and him they killed; and many others: [t]beating some and killing some. Having therefore † yet one beloved [u]son, he

* Many omit. † Many read, "He had."

m Matt. 21. 23–27. Lk. 20. 1–8. *cf.* Jno. 5. 30. *cf.* Jno. 6. 57.
n *cf.* Lk. 7. 24–35.
o *cf.* Jno. 1. 19–28. *cf.* Jno. 5. 35.
p Matt. 21. 33–46. Lk. 20. 9–18.
q *cf.* Is. 5.1–7. *cf.* Ps. 80. 8–16. *cf.* Deut. 7. 2–6.
r *cf.* Matt. 25. 14. *cf.* Josh.24. 12–14. *ctr.* Jno.15. 1 with 1Co. 3. 8, 9.
s *cf.* Deut. 26. 8–14. *ctr.* Hos.10. 1. *cf.* ch.11.13.
t *cf.* 2 Chr. 16. 10. *cf.* Matt.23. 34–36. *cf.* Acts 7. 52.
u *cf.* Heb.1. 1, 2. *cf.* Jno.3.16.

cant incident of the widow's mites. It gives, as already said, the Lord's judgment in detail of Israel's condition, in her chosen leaders, who unite in opposition, though veiled, against Him. Everywhere they are met, refuted, their disguise stripped off, until He closes argument with His own triumphant question how Christ can be the Son of David. This is followed by His denunciation of the scribes, and His appraisal of all their ostentatious giving to the temple treasury as less in value than the widow's "two mites which make a farthing."

[1] The question of authority is the one first raised; upon the face of it unutterable folly; for His works bore witness of Him, and it was impossible to suppose that divine power, such as was manifest in them, could have been gained unlawfully. He refuses, therefore, to answer their question, except they answer first His own. If competent to discern as to Himself (and if not, it would be of no use to answer them), they should know as to the baptism of John, whether it was from heaven or of men. If they knew, let them answer.

But they dare not answer. On the one side they cannot excuse themselves, if it were from heaven, for not being his disciples: on the other, they could not deny his claim for fear of the people. And the only refuge left for them is in what for them is a complete and yet most insincere humiliation; they cannot tell!

[2] The parable of the two sons which Matthew gives is here omitted, and that of the vineyard comes into the second place. The thought of the vineyard was familiar to them from the prophets, who had pressed upon them the claims of

sent him unto them last, saying, They will respect my son. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the [v]heir: come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they took him, and [w]killed him, and cast him out without the vineyard. What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do? He will [x]come and destroy the husbandmen, and give the vineyard unto others. Have ye not read even this scripture, The [y]stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner: this was from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes?

And they sought to lay hold on him, and [z]feared the multitude: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them; and they left him, and went away.

3 (xii.13-17): Cæsar's portion and and God's: an unveiling.

[3] And they send to him certain of the [a]Pharisees and of the Herodians, that they might catch him in [some] matter.* And when they were come, they say unto him, Teacher, we know that thou art true, and carest not for any one: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God with truth. Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not? shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me

v *cf.* Ps. 89. 27. *cf.* Jno. 19. 15. *cf.* Acts 3. 17.
w *cf.* ch. 9. 13, 31. *cf.* Acts 2. 23. *cf.* Acts 13. 27, 28.
x *cf.* Lk. 19. 27. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 8, 9.
y Ps. 118.22. 23. 1 Pet. 2.7,8.
z ch. 11. 32.
a Matt. 22. 15-22. Lk. 20. 20-26.

*λόγος, "matter of speech."

God as to it; and they had built the sepulcres of these prophets, whom they could not deny that their fathers killed. With the murder of the One who spoke to them in their hearts, how could they deny that they were in the succession of the parable? Then came their own Scriptures to prove that the corner stone of God's building was one rejected by the builders. Clearly they could understand that all this spoke of them, and feel it enough to be maddened by it.

[3] Now they break up into parties, (Pharisees and Herodians) which unite together, however, in dexterous combination. They do not question His authority any more: they know that He is true and teaches the way of God in truth. Nor will the fear of man shut *His* mouth.

So they have a question to ask, an important one, touching closely all ranks and conditions among them, and quite apt to kindle dangerous passions. Pharisees and Herodians were divided about it: here it was for Him to settle: Should they give tribute to Cæsar? Aye, or no?

But they cannot dig deep enough to hide from Him the hypocrisy of that question, that they were merely, as He tells them, tempting Him. Yet He will not decline it: let them only bring Him the tribute money. And they bring it: and there is the image of Cæsar stamped broadly upon it.

They cannot deny,—they are not suffered to ignore the fact,—that this is Cæsar's money. But how much lay hid under this for those that were still capable of entertaining such questions. How long they had given up any full, entire reliance upon the Almighty, the God of their father Abraham, and by profession their own! They had leaned upon another arm than His. They had coveted the riches of a world which Abraham had refused. They were trafficking with Cæsar's money, and must pay him back his money. Issachar in their father Jacob's prophecy had proved but too surely their type: Issachar, the "bony ass, couching between the hurdles: and he saw the land that it was good, and rest that it was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became servant to tribute."

a penny,* that I may see it. And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cæsar's. And Jesus said unto them, [b]Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's. And they wondered much at him.

[4] (xii.18-27): the failure of human tests in divine things.

[4] And there come unto him [c]Sadducees, who say that there is no resurrection, and they asked him, saying, Teacher, [d]Moses wrote unto us, if a man's brother die, and leave a wife behind him, and leave no child, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. There were seven brethren, and the first took a wife, and, dying, left no seed; and the second took her, and died, and neither did *he* leave seed; and the third likewise. And the seven [took her and]† left no seed: last of all, the woman died also. In the resurrection, [when they shall rise again,]† whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her as wife. And Jesus said unto them, Is it not on this account ye err, [e]not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God? For when they rise from among the dead, they neither [f]marry nor are given in marriage; but are as angels in heaven. But as regards the dead that they rise, have ye not read in the book of Moses, at the bush, how God spake unto him, saying, I [g]am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

[5] (xii.28-34): as to the true responsibility to God.

[5] And one of the [h]scribes who had come up, and had heard them reasoning together, and knew that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The

b *cf.* Rom. 13. 1-8. *cf.* Tit. 3. 1. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 13-17.

c Matt. 22. 23-33. Lk. 20. 27-38.

d Deut. 25. 5, 6. *cfr.* Eph. 1. 3.

e *cf.* Acts 2. 24-31. *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 4.

f *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 42-52. *cf.* Gal. 3. 28.

g Gen. 28. 13. Ex. 3. 6. *cf.* Rom. 4. 17.

h Matt. 22. 35-40.

* "*A denarius.*" † Many omit.

Give Cæsar then what is his: no use to expect divine help to ignore what their sin had brought them into. No! and yet a way there was—a way which they had never taken: give God also His own! how surely then would the burden pass from their back, and the rest they longed for be obtained! "My yoke is easy, and my burden light."

"And they marvelled at Him."

[4] But they are not yet silenced; and after the Pharisee and the Herodian appears the Sadducee: a not unusual order at any time. With them we find the intrusion of mere human thought into spiritual things, and which with its own beggarliness would beggar heaven. But they know neither the Scriptures,—when did an infidel ever know the Scriptures?—nor the power of God. The Lord proves to them how the simplest sayings of God may contain what would enrich us for ever and we do not find it there. Shall we ever awake to the need we have of putting under adequate tillage the rich land which God has given us? As to the Lord's argument here, we can add little or nothing to what has been said in Matthew.

[5] As to the next question, Mark shows us under the tempting spirit of which Matthew speaks a certain effect nevertheless produced in the man who asks it. How apt we are to fight with the truth just when it is gaining access into our hearts! and how contrary often are the thoughts which unite to move us! In

first [commandment of all]* is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. [This is the first commandment].* And the second [like it]* is this: [j]Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is not another commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Right, teacher; thou hast spoken with truth: for he is [k]one, and there is none besides him; and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, [and with all the soul,]* and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself is much [l]more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered with intelligence, he said unto him, Thou art [m]not far from the kingdom of God. And no one any longer dared to question him.

6 (xii.35-37): the scribes conquered on their own ground.

6 And Jesus answered and said, as he taught in the temple, [n]How say the scribes that the Christ is the Son of David? for David himself [o]said in the Holy Spirit, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies a footstool for thy feet. David himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he his son? And the [p]common people heard him gladly.

7 (xii.38-40): completely judged.

7 And he said to them in his teaching, [q]Beware of the scribes, who desire to walk about in long robes, and [r]salutations in the market-places, and [s]chief seats in the synagogues, and chief places at feasts, who devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive a far greater judgment.

i Deut. 6. 4, 5. Lk. 10. 27.
j Lev. 19.18. Rom. 13. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 14. Jas. 2. 8.
k Deut. 4. 35, 39. Deut.32.39. Is. 45. 6, 22.
l 1 Sa. 15. 22. *cf.* Ps.51.16, 17. *cf.* Mi.6.6-9. *cf.* Hos. 6.6.
m *cf.* ch. 10. 21. *cf.* Acts 26. 28, 29.
n Matt. 22. 41-46. Lk. 20. 41-44.
o Ps. 110. 1. *cf.* Is. 11. 1. *cf.* Mi. 5. 2. *cf.* Rev. 22. 16.
p *cf.* Lk.15.1. *cf.* Matt.11. 5. *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 26-29.
q Lk. 20. 45-47.
r Matt. 23. 7-12. *ctr.* 1 Cor. 4. 9-16.
s Lk 11. 43. Matt. 23. 6. *ctr.* Jas. 2. 1-5. *cf.* 3 Jno. 9.
t Matt.23.14. *cf.* Rom. 2. 13. *cf.* Lk. 12. 47, 48.

* Many omit.

the scribe before us we find a further effect of the answer given to his question, and the Lord Himself pronounces him "not far from the Kingdom of God." We are not told that he ever entered it; but we have good reason for hope that he had reached the place in which he was as the result of a seeking which could not fail of divine guidance. It needed some boldness to proclaim so heartily his acceptance of the truth, (simple as it may seem and is,) that love to God and to one's neighbor is "more than all whole burnt-offering and sacrifices," and this in sympathetic admiration of Jesus of Nazareth, and in the midst of those who were His open adversaries.

With the exception of this, Matthew's account is almost exactly that of Mark, and we cannot add to what is said of it in the former Gospel.

6 After the scribe's confession, "no one any longer dared to question Him." But He now turns upon His silenced enemies with a question on His own part. The charge against Him was that "He made Himself the Son of God." The creed of the scribes was that Messiah was simply Son of David. He produces David himself therefore in proof that He must be more: otherwise how, as in the 110th psalm, could the father call his son his lord? To this they have, and could have, no answer.

7 He proceeds to warn the people against the scribes. Mark does not however reproduce here the detailed judgment which is given in Matthew. He speaks of their love of display, of human applause, of leadership, their very prayers a

8 (xii. 41-44): a turn of the page.

[8] And Jesus, sitting down over against the [u] treasury, beheld how the multitude cast money into the treasury; and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a poor [v] widow and cast in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called his disciples and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than all they that have cast into the treasury: for they all have cast in of their superfluity; but she of her destitution did cast in all that she had, the [w] whole of her living.

3 (xiii.): His manifestation in glory.

1 (1-13): the beginnings of birth-pains.

3. [1] And as he went forth out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Teacher, [z] behold what manner of stones, and what manner of buildings. And Jesus said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left here one stone upon another* that shall not be [y] thrown down. And as he sat on the

u Lk. 21. 1-4.

v *cf.* ver. 40. *cf.* 1 Ki. 17. 9. *cf.* Lam. 1. 1-4.

w *cf.* 2 Cor. 8. 1-5, 12. *cf.* Phil. 2. 17, 30.

x Matt. 24. 1, 2. Lk. 21. 5, 6. *cfr.* 1 Cor. 3. 11-15. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 4-9.

y *cf.* 1 Ki. 9. 7. *cf.* Jer. 7. 14.

* Literally, "a stone upon a stone."

hypocrisy, while they devoured in their greed the substance of the poor and unprotected. Such were the religious chiefs of the nation, and their character was one most easily to be discerned surely. Yet these blind leaders were as blindly followed.

[8] He turns the page, and shows us amid such a state of things what the eye of God could discern, and His heart delight in, the act of a poor widow, too poor to tempt even the rapacity of a scribe, yet not too poor to put into the temple-treasury a gift beyond all the rich gifts of the wealthiest worshipers. "Two mites which make a farthing:" really about three quarters of a farthing! but the value of it, as our Lord declares, was not according to the market—according to its buying capacity, but intangible and spiritual. The two mites were all the means she had: "all her living." She had put her heart in with it: a heart that had no reserve,—that would keep nothing back from God. The value of it was that of sacrifice, and could not miss appreciation by One who was Himself the Great Sacrifice, or by Him who spared not for us His own Son.

But this was one among all that had cast in; and the commendation takes the form of condemnation; the joy of approbation is only as of a sweet note amid dissonance. Nay, the existence of this one verity of goodness and devotedness seems only to make worse the awful falsehood and self-service and arrogancy of pretension all around. Israel remains unhealed, unhelped, with her sin upon her, and going on to the culminating sin of sins—the Cross.

And, as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man. There is naturally no difference. The lesson here is lesson for us all, and the exception is of divine grace only. Thus the Cross was not man's sin only, but the grace that meets his sin: and

"The very spear that pierced Thy side
Drew forth the blood to save."

3. But before the Cross is reached, the veil is once more for a moment drawn aside, and we are given to see the One rejected and disowned of men coming in the glory of heaven when unbelief shall be possible no more, and resistance beyond a moment's possible thought. We have been already through this great prophecy in Matthew, whom Mark in what he gives of it almost entirely resembles. No doubt there are certain differences, and for these and for the resemblances alike there must be spiritual reasons which we should be able to give some account of. But for this the Gospels in their entirety must be better known, and each part apprehended in the light of the whole. Too little believing work has been done in this direction to enable us to say much to the purpose as to it. That there is divine wisdom in it all it should not need to say;

mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, [z]Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things are about to be fulfilled? And Jesus [answering them]* began to say, Take heed that no one lead you [a]astray: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am [he]; and shall lead many astray. And when ye shall hear of [b]wars and rumors of wars, be not troubled: these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be [c]earthquakes in [divers] places; and there shall be famines [and troubles]:* these things are the beginning of travail.

But take ye heed to yourselves: for they shall [d]deliver you up to councils; and in synagogues shall ye be beaten; and ye shall stand before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony unto them. And the [e]gospel must first be preached unto all the nations. And when they shall lead you away to deliver you up, be not [f]anxious beforehand as to what ye shall say; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Spirit. And [g]brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his child; and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be [h]hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.

* Many omit.

z Matt. 24. 3, etc. Lk. 21. 7, etc. *cf.* Lk. 17. 20-37.

a *cf.* 2Thess. 2. 1-3.

b *cf.* Rev. 6. 2-4.

c Rev. 6. 12. Rev. 8. 5.

d *cf.* Matt. 10. 17, 18. *cf.* Jno. 16. 2.

e Matt. 24. 14.

f Matt. 10. 19. Lk. 12. 11, 12. Lk. 21. 14. *cf.* Acts 5. 29-32. *cf.* Acts 26. 1, 2, etc.

g *cf.* Jer 9. 4. *cf.* Mi. 7. 5, 6. Matt. 10. 21, 34-36. Lk. 21. 16.

h Matt. 24. 9. Lk. 21. 17. *cf.* Jno. 16. 1-3. *cf.* Acts 28. 22. *cf.* 1 Pet. 4. 14.

but one may have to confess ignorance, which the many with whom we share it prevent being felt with the shame which should belong to it. To avoid mere repetition the notes on Matthew must be referred to throughout.

[1] The introductory portion no doubt takes in, in its general characteristics, the present time; though Christianity, as such, is not contemplated in it. It partakes in this way in the character of Old Testament prophecy, in which the present dispensation has no place; save, indeed, as you may call a type a prophecy, and then we can find such parabolic utterances not seldom. The prophecy of our Lord here has, in Matthew's version of it, quite similarly its Christian portion couched in this parabolic style. The time had not yet come for plainer speech. Mark and Luke alike omit all this Christian part; while the indefiniteness of this introductory portion leaves room for what is not explicitly found there.

Mark, as well as Luke, emphasizes in a special manner the persecutions that the disciples would have to endure, which in Luke are declared to take place before the signs among the nations. They are, therefore, persecutions of the early Christian days, such as the Acts show us to have taken place as soon as the new message of salvation was proclaimed. In this way the testimony to governors and kings was to be given; and they were, without any anxiety about it, to rely entirely upon the Spirit of God for all that they should say. Even the natural love of kindred would be destroyed by the spirit of hostility to Christ. He that endured to the end would be saved.

[2] The last clause, while as a general principle it applies to all, has certainly a

2 (14-23): the abomination of desolation.

[2] But when ye shall see the [i]abomination of desolation standing where it ought not (he that readeth, let him understand), then let them that are in Judea [j]flee to the mountains, and let him that is upon the house-top not go down, nor enter in, to take anything out of his house; and let him that is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that it* be not in the winter. For those days shall be a [k]tribulation such as there hath not been the like from the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never shall be. And except the Lord had [l]shortened the days, no flesh would be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days. And then, if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is the Christ; or, Lo, there! believe it not: for there shall arise [m]false Christs and false prophets, and shall show signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. But take ye heed: behold, I have told you all things beforehand.

3 (24-27): the appearing of Christ.

[3] But in those days, [n]after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall be falling from heaven, and the [o]powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see the [p]Son of man coming in clouds, with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and [q]gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

4 (28-37): watchfulness on the way.

[4] Now from the [r]fig-tree learn the parable. When its branch already becometh tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. So also ye, when

* Some read, "your flight."

i Matt. 24. 15-20. Dan. 9. 27. *cf.* Rev. 13. 14-18.
j *cf.* Rev. 12. 6. *cf.* Lk. 21. 20-24. *cf.* Zech. 14. 4, 5.
k Dan. 12. 1. *cf.* Rev. 7. 14.
l *cf.* Is. 26. 20. *cf.* Dan. 9. 27 with Rev. 12. 12-14.
m Matt. 24. 11, 23, 24 with Rev. 13. 11-18. *cf.* 2 Thess. 2. 3-12.
n Matt. 24. 29. *cf.* Joel 2. 31. Lk. 21. 25, 26. *cf.* Rev. 8. 12.
o *cf.* Heb. 12. 26-29. *cf.* Dan. 8. 10, 11.
p Dan. 7. 13. Matt. 24. 30. Lk. 21. 27. Rev. 1. 7. Rev. 19. 11.
q *cf.* Matt. 13. 30, 41-43. Matt. 24. 31. *cf.* Ps. 50. 5.
r Matt. 24. 32-35. Lk. 21. 29-33. *cf.* Song 7. 12.

special reference to the time of the end, and the Lord goes on immediately to the abomination standing in the holy place, "where" (above all) "it ought not:" the very place in which idolatrous worship would be the most open defiance of Him who had peremptorily forbidden it. This, as we have seen in Matthew, undoubtedly refers to days that are yet to come, after the present dispensation is ended by the removal of the saints to meet the Lord in the air, and when the "remnant of His brethren," as Micah declares, "shall return to the children of Israel" (Micah v. 3): that is, when those converted to God in Israel will no longer find their place as now in the body of Christ, but share the national hopes and promises of the ancient people of God.

All the warnings of the great tribulation following here are almost word for word as we find them in Matthew, with the omission only of the reference to the sabbath, and the danger of deception as to His being in the desert or the secret chambers.

[3] The signs which precede the coming of the Lord follow, and then the Son of man, coming in the clouds of heaven, sends forth His angels to gather together His elect from the four winds,—Israel, once more His people, from their long dispersion.

[4] The parable of the revival of Israel's fig-tree from her winter sleep, with

ye see these things coming to pass, know that it is nigh —at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This [s]generation shall in no wise pass away, till all these things come to pass. [t]Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall in no wise pass away. But of that [u]day or of that hour knoweth no one, no not the angels that are in heaven, neither the [v]Son, but the Father. Take heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is. It is as [w]when a man, away out of the country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, and to [x]each one his work, hath commanded also the porter to watch. Watch therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning: lest, coming suddenly, he find you [y]sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, [z]Watch.

s *cf.* Matt. 10. 23. *cf.* Rom. 9. 28.
t *cf.* Matt. 5. 18. *cf.* Jer. 31. 35-37.
u *cf.* Acts 1. 7. *cf.* 1 Thess. 5. 1-10.
v *cf.* Phil. 2. 7 with John 5. 30. *ctr.* John 6. 30.
w Matt. 24. 45-51.
x *cf.* Matt. 25. 14, etc. *cf.* Rom. 12. 6, etc.
y *cf.* Rom. 13. 11-14. *cf.* Eph. 5. 14.

cf. 1 Thess. 5. 5-7. z Matt. 24. 42; Matt. 25. 13; *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 13.

what follows to the thirty-second verse, is again almost word for word with Matthew. But Mark alone, in recording the Lord's declaration that "of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven," inserts "neither the Son."* This the Lord's character as the Son of God in service sufficiently explains. "The servant knoweth not what his lord doeth." And to the Corinthians the apostle says, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." It is not a question of His divine knowledge, but of what He knew as about His Father's business, as the apostle at Corinth knew nothing but the Crucified One.

It has been urged against this that it is not in this sense that no man or angel knoweth; but this as an objection has no force. For the point of our Lord's words is the inaccessibleness *to man* of this knowledge. There was none to whom one could go for this knowledge: neither man nor angel could communicate it, nor the Son either, as the apostle of His Father's will. It is a pregnant example of how we need to apprehend the divisions of Scripture according to their proper significance, in order to get the details rightly. "Take ye heed, watch and pray," the Lord adds, "for ye know not when the time is."

Notice the interests which Christ has here. He is going up to where He was before,—to the Father's presence and joy; yet He presents Himself here as having His house on earth, leaving it for a time and coming back to it, to those who have been entrusted with the work and authority of it in the meantime: a theme upon which Matthew dwells more at large. The master of the house comes back at an unknown hour, "at even, midnight, cock-crowing, or in the morning." Later it cannot be, for He of whom this is spoken Himself *brings* the day. But with the uncertainty, watchfulness is imperative: the true disciple must not be caught asleep.

Subd. 2.

We come now to the Cross. Every view of Christ that the Gospels give connects with the Cross. Every step He took in this world led Him to the Cross. Men's voices decreed Him to be worthy of death. The multitude, in the land where He had rained miracles of mercy, shouted "Crucify Him." Man's wickedness gave Him the Cross. Man's need led Him to it. The righteousness and love—the whole glory of God—find in it their fullest and their eternal display.

* It is found, however, in some copies of Matthew: see notes Matt. xxiv. 36.

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chaps. xiv., xv.)

The Cross.

SECTION 1. (chap. xiv. 1-52.)

The cup chosen.

1 (1-11): The traitor's choice and the occasion.
1 (1, 2): the purpose.
2 (3-9): love and utilitarianism.

1. [1] NOW after two days was the [a]passover and unleavened bread; and the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they might lay hold of him by craft and kill him: for they said, Not at the feast, lest haply there might be a tumult of the people.

[2] And [b]when he was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as he was at table, there came a woman having an alabaster cruse of [c]ointment of pure nard,* very precious: and she brake the cruse, and poured it on his head. Now there were some [d]indignant among themselves, and saying, Why was this waste of the ointment made? for this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred pence,† and given to the poor.

a Matt. 26. 1-5. Lk. 22. 1, 2. Jno. 11. 55-57.

b Matt. 26. 6-13. Jno. 12. 1-8.

c *cf.* Ex. 30. 34-38 with Song 1. 3, 12, 13. *cf.* Ps. 45. 8.

d *cf.* Lk. 18. 15.

* Or "spikenard." † "Denarii."

Sec. 1.

The Gospel of Mark shows us the Cross in its sin-offering character, as already stated, Matthew giving the trespass-offering. These two Gospels, as having alike the Lord's cry of abandonment, most evidently represent the offerings which as emphasizing the judgment of sin are not "sweet savor." The distinction has been pointed out in the Introduction (pp. 26–28), and we shall have to touch afresh upon its proofs and illustrations as we go through this closing portion. The essence of the sin-offering is that "cup" which in Matthew's narrative of the agony in the garden has been already before us, and the Lord's choice of it there surely characterizes this first section. Matthew and Mark, it will be seen, cling closely together here as elsewhere, while there is also a difference which is characteristic in the case of each.

1. [1] It is the divine will to which Christ bows in taking the cup. It is not to be wondered at that, here at the outset, that divine will should make itself apparent, overruling, controlling, working by, the various and conflicting wills of men. This is what we find in the introductory portion here, of which the last two verses show how and how far the first two were fulfilled, while what comes between shows what brought about the traitor's action.

The hearts of the chief priests were set on mischief; but they were permitted thus to bring about the will of God for an infinite blessing. Yet their plots are not permitted to entangle the Lamb of the sacrifice: these are anticipated; and although He is delivered into their hands, yet it is open-eyed and unresisting. They must dishonor themselves by purchasing treachery with the blood-money, soon to be hurled back at them by their miserable tool, with words which must have haunted them ever after. Not even *they* dare put into the treasury that "price of blood."

[2] In the midst of all this there comes the beauteous story of the woman's ointment, always to be told wherever the gospel is preached, for a memorial of her: protest as it is against the utilitarianism which in the gospel itself would make Christ of less account than the "poor" who are to be benefited by Him. Ah, let us remember the claims of the Christ of God, if the poor themselves are not to suffer. This utilitarianism may well hide under it a Judas as chief instigator, while it seduces with its fair seeming even true disciples.

The spikenard is for His burial. That which she has that is precious here goes into the grave with Christ; and though He is not there now, the doctrine of Christ goes further for the Christian: for we ourselves are dead and buried

And they murmured against her. But Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For the poor ye have always with you, and when ye will ye can do good to them; but [e]me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she hath come beforehand* to anoint my body for the [f]burial. And verily I say unto you, Wherever the gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a [g]memorial of her.

3 (10, 11): fulfilment of the purpose.

3 And [h]Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, that he might deliver him up to them. And they, when they heard it, were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might, at a good opportunity, deliver him up.

2 (12-31): Love's witness to His disciples with the cross in sight.

1 (12-17): the preparation of the passover.

2. [1] And the [i]first day of unleavened bread, when they slew the passover, his disciples say unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayest eat the passover? And he [j]sendeth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow

e *cf.* Lk. 5. 35.

f *ctr.* Matt. 16. 22, 23. *cf.* Phil. 3. 10.

g *cf.* Jno. 11. 2. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 10, 11.

h Matt. 26. 14–16. Lk. 22. 3–6.

i Matt. 26. 17–19. Lk. 22. 7–13. *cf.* Jno. 13. 1.

j *cf.* ch. 11. 1. *cf.* Jno. 2. 6–10.

* Literally, "anticipated."

with Him, and in Him alone we live, where He is gone. Thus we are identified with Him, to seek His interests only, as *He* secures *ours*. Woe will it be to any who sacrifice the claims of Christ for any other. The universe hangs upon Him: "in Him all things subsist:" "all things were created by Him and for Him"; and nothing can be right that is not in its due place of relationship to Him.

[3] The traitor understands more truly than many Christians the significance of the burial of Christ. The three hundred pence are gone for him without possible recovery. The bag he has carried will soon be as unprofitable. He must get what he can, if he sell Christ for it: and all they to whom Christ is offered and who turn away from Him to grasp the world instead, are *they* not after their manner selling Christ too? and valuing Him perhaps no higher than he did?

2. We follow on now to see the Lord at His last passover with His disciples before He suffers, and instituting His own memorial feast to take its place. The Old Testament is about to give place to the New, and He who is Lord of the sabbath and of the sacrificial rites fulfilled in Him, shows Himself Master of the future which He predicts, and of His own part in it, amid enemies that surround Him, and adverse conditions that seem to hold Him in their grasp. But the ram of consecration can be held only by its horns: it is His very power that makes Him submit and serve, while divine love contemplates the blessed end of all. And those around Him now, the few sheep so soon to be scattered, are the objects of His unfailing care, which would prepare them for the trial so near at hand. This, especially in the synoptics; while John shows us at this time the full out-pouring of His heart, in which, far beyond the present trial, He enters into the blessings of the new era coming in. John's is the Christian Gospel, and, not here alone but throughout, occupies itself with glories which even Christians have feebly apprehended.

[1] Mark gives, as Matthew does not, the special signs which would assure the disciples when they would have reached the house in which He would eat the passover. Was it not on their account that they were permitted thus to see how perfectly the apprehension of the minutest details of the future was possessed by Him. Dispensationally also, was not the man with but the pitcher of water

him; and wherever he shall enter in, say unto the master of the house, The teacher saith, Where is the guestchamber for me, where I may eat the passover with my disciples? And he will himself show you a large upper room furnished [and] ready; and there prepare for us. And the disciples departed and went into the city, and found as he had said to them. And they prepared the passover. And when the even was come, he cometh with the twelve.

2 (18-21): the traitor pointed to.

[2] And as they were at table and eating, Jesus said Verily I say unto you, that [k]one of you, who is eating with me, shall deliver me up. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him, one by one, Is it I?* And he said unto them, It is one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish. Because the Son of man goeth, as it is written of him, but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is delivered up: [l]good were it for that man if he had not been born.

3 (22-25): the memorial.

[3] And as they were eating, Jesus [m]took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave it to them, and said, Take it: [n]this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my [o]blood of the† covenant, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you that I will drink [p]no more of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

4 (26-31): testing.

[4] And when they had [q]sung a hymn, they went out unto the Mount of Olives. And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended: for it is [r]written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

k Matt. 26. 20-25. Lk. 22. 21-23. Jno. 13.21-30. *cf.* Ps.55.12-14.

l *cf.* Jno. 6. 70, 71. *cf.* Jno. 17. 12. *cf.* Acts 1. 25.

m Matt. 26. 26-29. Lk. 22. 19, 20. *cf.*1 Cor.11. 20-34. *cf.* Acts 20. 7.

n 1 Cor. 10. 16. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 24. *cf.* Heb.10. 5, 10.

o *cf.*1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. *cf.* Heb.10. 19.

p *cf.*Is.53.10, 11. *cf.* Heb.12. 2.

q Matt. 26. 30. *ctr.* ver.34.

r Matt. 26. 31, 32. Zech. 13. 7.

* Some add "and another, Is it I?" † Many add, "new."

passing on to the place whence presently the rivers of living water were to flow forth? Indeed, the Old Testament had prepared the place already, which He alone could fill with His glory. Now He is come, for whom it is prepared.

[2] Now they must learn from His own lips that one of the twelve should deliver Him up. It was needful that they should be prepared for this uttermost wickedness, which, however, like so much else, they do not seem to have understood in its real character. It was needful also to the divine love which would not give up even a Judas without warning, to let him know that "even the night" was "light about" him. Scripture too had forewarned and pointed at him. And the Lord adds His awful warning: "good were it for that man if he had not been born."

[3] The institution of the Supper follows, almost in the words of Matthew. Mark omits "for the remission of sins," and for "My Father's Kingdom" substitutes "the Kingdom of God."

[4] They sing a hymn and go out to the Mount of Olives. And there follows now the warning of the trial coming from the smiting of the Shepherd. All would be stumbled; but He carries on their thoughts to His resurrection and going before them into Galilee. Peter protests more than once in his vehement way that he never would be stumbled; and when the Lord adds that he would that night thrice deny Him, he still more stoutly protests that, though he should die with Him, he will not deny Him. He does not discern that this very

But after that I am [s]risen, I will go before you into Galilee. But [t]Peter said unto him, Though all shall be offended, yet will not I. And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee that thou to-day, [even] this night, before the cock crow twice, shalt thrice deny me. But he spake exceeding vehemently, If I should have to die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. And [u]so also said they all.

3 (32–42): Gethsemane.

3. And they [v]come unto a place, whose name is Gethsemane; and he saith unto his disciples, Sit ye here while I shall pray. And he [w]taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly amazed and sore troubled. And he saith unto them, My soul is plunged in grief, [even] to death: remain here and watch. And going forward a little, he [x]fell upon the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass away from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible with thee: take away this cup from me; yet not what I will, but what thou wilt. And he cometh and findeth them [y]sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? canst thou not watch one hour? watch and pray, that ye come not into temptation: the [z]spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. And he went away again and prayed, saying the same thing. And he came again and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy; and they knew not what to answer him. And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest. It is enough: the [a]hour is come; behold, the Son of man is delivered up into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand who delivereth me up.

4 (43–52): The yielding and the testing.

4. And [b]immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, cometh up, and with him a multitude with swords and staves from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. Now he that delivered him

s ch. 16. 7. Matt. 28. 7, 10, 16.
t Matt. 26. 33–35. Lk. 22. 31–34. Jno. 13. 36–38. *cf.* 1 Cor. 4. 4 with Phil. 3. 3.
u cf. Prov. 27. 19.
v Matt. 26. 36–46. Lk. 22. 39–46. Jno. 18. 1, 2.
w cf. ch. 5. 37. *cf.* ch. 9. 2. *cf.* Jno. 12. 27.
x cf. Heb. 5. 7, 8. *cf.* Ps. 102, title. *cf.* 2 Cor. 13. 4.
y cf. ch. 10. 38. *cf.* Ps. 88. 18.
z cf. Gal. 5. 17.
a cf. Jno. 7. 30 with Jno. 13. 1.
b Matt. 26. 47–50. Lk. 22. 47, 48. Jno. 18. 3–9. Acts 1. 16.

strength of his is his weakness. And the others with as little discernment repeat his protest.

3. The agony in Gethsemane is told alike in Matthew and in the present Gospel; and we have already considered it. Not the view of death nor of any attendant suffering could move Christ after this manner. It would be dishonor to Him to suppose it. There is but one thing mighty enough to do so, and this connects it with the surpassing agony of the Cross, the forsaking of God. This, we shall find that Mark, by the abridgement or omission of other things, brings into emphatic prominence: it is the full reality of substitution, the Sinless in the sinner's place; and it is this that He is anticipating here.

4. Judas comes up with his band of men from the chief priests and scribes, and into such hands He surrenders Himself for the accomplishment of His Father's will. The disciples are struggling against it,—fighting, and then fleeing. His reproof of them is not given here, but only of the multitudes. Exceptional in Mark is the story of the young man clad in a linen or muslin garment (a *sindon*), which when they lay hold upon him, he leaves in their hands, and escapes from them naked.

up had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he; lay hold of him and lead him away safely. And when he was come, immediately he came to him, and saith unto him, Rabbi, and [c]kissed him affectionately. And they laid their hands upon him and took him. But [d]one of those who stood by drew his sword, and smote the servant of the high priest, and struck off his ear. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out as against a [e]robber, with swords and staves, to take me? I was daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye took me not: but [this is] that the [f]scriptures might be fulfilled. And they all [g]forsook him and fled. And a certain young man followed him with a linen cloth cast about him, over his naked [body], and they lay hold upon him. But he, [h]leaving the linen cloth behind, fled from them naked.

c cf. Ps. 55. 21. cf. Ps. 62. 4. cf. Ezek. 33. 31.
d Matt. 26. 51-54. Lk. 22. 49-51. Jno. 18. 10, 11.
e Matt. 26. 55, 56. Lk. 22. 52, 53. cf. Lk. 22. 37.
f cf. Jno. 18. 9. cf. Jno. 19. 24.
g ver. 27. cf. Ps. 31. 11. cf. Ps. 142. 4.
h cf. ver. 54.

SECTION 2. (Chaps. xiv. 53–xv. 15.)

The false condemnation.

1 (xiv. 53-72): The true charge, and the truth charged.
1 (53-65): the confession of the Master.

1. [1] And they led Jesus away to the [i]high priest; and there come together* all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. And Peter followed him afar off, even

i Matt. 26. 57, etc. Lk. 22. 54, etc. Jno. 18. 13, etc.

* Some add "to him."

Significant it seems that the *sindon*, though generally spoken of as a night-dress, was such a wrapper as was used to enwrap the dead, and is actually, in the only other case in the New Testament, applied to that in which the Lord's body was wrapped (Matt. xxvii. 59; ch. xv. 46; Luke xxiii. 53). It came to be used for any light garment made of this material, and so might be a night-dress; but does not seem to be the word for this specifically.

Its connection with the dead has suggested an allegorical meaning for the story here, at a time when all facts seem to allegorize (if there be even any exception in this way as to Scripture facts). It has been spoken* of as suggestive of the vanity of human effort against the Christ of God. The priests and people, Herod and Pilate, got nothing of the Man against whom they combined but the grave-clothes empty of their temporary occupant. The living Person had escaped: the true life was untouched. And this might be a parable as to all His followers, to whom indeed, as in Christ before God, the vestment of the body is but as it were the light garment of the dead, in whom a hidden life resides not to be touched of death: "the gates of hades cannot prevail against it." In the midst of a hostile world, the Lord of life has well provided for His own.

Sec. 2.

The condemnation of the Lord—trial in any real sense there was not—was two-fold. Before the high priest and council it was upon the true charge, and the truth it was that was charged against Him. He was condemned on His own confession of the truth, that He was the Son of God. Before Pilate they change this accusation for another, that He claimed to be King of the Jews: this for the obvious reason that they can plead: "Whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar." These things naturally appear in all the Gospels, though with different emphasis and omissions as to particular details, according to the different line of truth in each. Matthew and Mark, as usual, come nearest together; John is the most distinct.

1. [1] The confession of the Master is set before us in evident contrast with the

* In the Sermons of Henry Melville.

within into the court of the high priest; and he was sitting with the officers, and [j] warming himself in the light [of the fire]. Now the chief priests and the whole council sought witness against Jesus to put him to death, and found none. For many bare [k] false witness against him, and their witness agreed not. And certain persons rose up and bare false witness against him, saying, We heard him say, I will [l] destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days will build another made without hands. And neither thus did their witness agree. And the high priest rose up in the midst and asked Jesus, saying, [m] Answerest thou nothing? What is it that these bear witness against thee? But he was [n] silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him and saith unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One? And Jesus said, [o] I am: and ye shall see the Son of man [p] sitting at the right hand of power, and [q] coming with the clouds of heaven. And the high priest [r] rent his clothes, and saith, What further need have we of witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all [s] condemned him [as] worthy of death. And some began to [t] spit upon him, and to cover his face and buffet him, and say unto him, Prophesy. And the officers struck him with the palms of their hands.

2 (66-72): the denial of the disciple.

[2] And while [u] Peter was below in the court, there came

[j] Lk. 22. 55. Jno. 18. 18. cf. Jno. 21. 9. cf. Eph. 5. 11 with Is. 50. 11.
[k] Matt. 26. 59-61. cf. Ps. 35. 11.
[l] Jno. 2. 18-22. ch. 15. 29.
[m] Matt. 26. 62.
[n] Is. 53. 7.
[o] Matt. 26. 63, 64. cf. Lev. 5. 1.
[p] ch. 16. 19. Ps. 110. 1. Lk. 22. 69.
[q] Matt. 25. 31. Dan. 7. 13. Rev. 1. 7.
[r] Matt. 26. 65. cf. 2 Ki. 19. 1.
[s] Matt. 26. 66. cf. Jno. 19. 7. cf. Lev. 24. 16.
[t] cf. Is. 50. 6. cf. Is. 52. 14.
[u] Matt. 26. 69-75. Lk. 22. 56-62. Jno. 18. 25-27.

denial of the disciple. In every part of this scene man is exposed; consistent only in wickedness, unreliable and inconstant where truest in heart. His self-confidence is his weakness; his weakness, known and owned, his only strength. The Second Man stands alone amid a ruined world; most glorious in this utter desolation; all contradictions uniting to approve Him; all depths to place Him highest. The simple language of the evangelists, putting not an additional word even of emotion—not an irrepressible note of wonder or of praise, to the mere recital of His words, His deeds, His sufferings, is in fact the hush of the sanctuary of His presence, the only fit celebration of that unique glory with which nothing else must or can mingle.

Before the high priest the false witnesses are condemned by their contradiction of each other. They *sought* witnesses for the purpose that was in their hearts before. And are not those who bring such witness, commonly, if not constantly, of such a spirit? Do not they dare even to search Scripture to justify the condemnation they have determined on already? And yet how often are they obliged to put out of court their own witnesses! How little can they quote without misquoting. It was they who even now were seeking to destroy the temple of God, as His words had implied they would; and it was no other could replace this, but He would raise it up again. Still there was no agreement: and the high priest turns to Jesus, to make Him answer what had need of none, and thus make something of what was nothing. He is therefore silent.

But the direct question He will not fail to answer. "Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" must be answered with no ambiguity at all. It will give them what they seek against Him; but it will give rest also to those that are true enquirers, and minister through the ages to the blessing of man. Yes, He is the Son of the Blessed, while He is the Son of man as well; and they shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.

[2] The denial of the disciple follows the confession of the Master. It speaks

one of the maidservants of the high priest; and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked on him and saith, Thou also wast with the Nazarene, Jesus. But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the outer court; and a cock crew. And the maid seeing him began again to say to those standing by, This is one of them. But he again denied it. And after a little while those that stood by said unto Peter again, Truly thou art one of them; for thou also art a Galilean. And he began to [v]curse and to swear, I know not this man of whom ye speak. And immediately, a second time, the cock crew. And Peter remembered the saying, how Jesus said unto him, [w]Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

v *cf.* 1 Sa. 21. 13. *cf.* Matt. 2. 8. *cf.* ver. 45.

w vers. 29-31.

2 (xv. 1-15): The feigned charge.

2. [1] And [x]immediately in the morning, the chief priests took counsel together with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate. And Pilate [y]asked him, Art *thou* the king of the Jews? And he answered and said unto him, Thou sayest [it]. And the chief priests accused him of many things. And Pilate again asked him, saying, Answerest thou nothing? Behold how many things they accuse thee of. But Jesus still [z]answered nothing; insomuch that Pilate marvelled.

1 (1-5): the confession.

x Matt. 27. 1, etc. Lk. 23. 1, etc. Jno. 18. 28, etc.

y Matt. 27. 11. Lk. 23. 3. Jno. 18. 33.

z *cf.* ch. 14. 60, 61.

2 (6-15): Jesus or Barabbas.

[2] Now at the feast he [a]used to release unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they asked. Now there was one called Barabbas, bound with them that had made insurrection, men who had committed [b]murder in the insurrection. And the multitude crying out began to ask him [to do] as he was wont to do unto them. And

a Matt. 27. 15-26. Lk. 23. 17-25. Jno. 18. 39, 40.

b Acts 3. 14. *cf.* Gen. 4. 8 with Jude 11.

for itself, and needs here little comment. Each evangelist gives it: for there is need of such a lesson being well learned, as that honesty of heart, and true love to Christ, and zeal for Him, cannot save us from the most terrible falls, without that distrust of ourselves which brings in the power of God for us. Not only the *sinner* needs to be broken down before God, but the *saint* does. Human strength avails nothing on the path he is called to tread.

Mark alone notices the twofold crowing of the cock, the latter being at the general cock-crowing of which the other Gospels speak. The first fails to arouse Peter; so easily may the conscience become torpid through the power of sin. Only Luke notices the tender reproof of the Lord's look, which followed the second: in fact those eyes had never been withdrawn from him; though the "look" was more than this: it was the divine recall of the wanderer to himself and to God.

2. [1] In the second part here, we have still a confession and a denial, though the latter of a very different kind to what we have just seen. The chief priests still charge Him with being what He truly is, although as a charge they make it falsely. He *is* the King of the Jews. To their further accusations He answers nothing, so that Pilate marvels: but He has no thought of saving Himself from what was before Him; had He purpose of this kind, He would have stood in no such fashion before His accusers. Mark almost leaves out Pilate: from his point of view he is but a mere circumstance.

[2] It is otherwise as to Barabbas, whose crimes are told out, as they are not in

Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the king of the Jews? For he knew that for [c]envy the chief priests had delivered him up. But the chief priests stirred up the multitude that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. And Pilate answering said to them again, What will ye then that I do [unto him] whom ye call the king of the Jews? And they cried out again, [d]Crucify him. And Pilate said unto them, Why, [e]what evil hath he done? But they cried out exceedingly, Crucify him. And Pilate, willing to content the multitude, [f]released Barabbas unto them, and delivered up Jesus, when he had [g]scourged him, to be crucified.

c *cf.* Matt. 21. 38. *cf.* Jno. 12. 19.

d Matt. 26.2 with Jno. 12. 32, 33. *cf.* Acts 13. 27-29. *cf.* Gal. 3.13.

e *cf.* Jno. 19. 4. *cf.* Jno. 8.46.

f ver. 6. *cf.* Is. 61. 1.

g *cf.* Is. 50.6.

SECTION 3. (Chap. xv. 16–47.)

The Cup drunk.

1 (xv.16-20): Crowned with the curse.

1. Now the soldiers led him away into the court which is the prætorium, and they call together the whole band. And they clothe him with [h]purple, and put on him a [i]crown of thorns which they had plaited. And they began to salute him, Hail, king of the Jews! And they [j]struck his head with a reed, and spat upon him, and bowing their knees worshiped him. And when

h *cf.* Ex. 26. 31 with ver. 26.

i *cf.* Is. 55.13. *cf.* Is. 53. 5. *ctr.* Heb. 2. 9.

j *cf.* Ps. 69.3. *cf.* Ps. 109. 4, 5.

Matthew. He is seen as a chief of sinners, a rebel and a murderer, for whom the feast of redemption offers a possibility of release, but only, according to Pilate's alternative, if Jesus is given up. Jesus becomes, as it were, the Substitute for the chief of sinners. To "release Barabbas" is "to destroy Jesus." Why? because He has done evil? the judge asks in vain, Where is it? Looking deeper than at the wicked wills of men, we may discern in the purpose of God that holy Sin-offering, the true passover, by which even a Barabbas may be delivered, not for good in him, for Barabbas shows none. Thus the gospel story is more completely unfolded. Barabbas is released: Jesus is given up.

Sec. 3.

1. Now we approach the drinking of the cup. He is crowned with thorns, the sign of the curse, as in Matthew, clothed with the purple, but without the reed-sceptre: that only smites Him. And it is indeed, but a reed that smites the Rock; yet presently, through the marvelous working of God, the waters will flow out; and the waters will become a great river, going forth on all sides to gladden the earth.

Notice that the robe is *purple** here, not *scarlet*, as in Matthew. The blood-color is here, but mingled: as we have seen, even the precious blood of atonement, that it might sanctify the people, must be that of a sacrifice offered outside the camp (Heb. xiii. 11, 12). And "so Jesus, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." Here is the true sin-offering, and here is the purple, the composite color,—the blood, the death-penalty taken; but with that, the heavenly side also, that is, the blue. For

* "A scarlet military mantle," says Lange, "was made to represent the imperial purple: hence the designation, *a purple* (πορφυραν) a purple robe, as Mark and John describe it. And because this is the symbolic import of the robe, there is no discrepancy. The scarlet military robe no more required to be a real purple than the crown of thorns required to be a real crown, or the reed a real sceptre; for the whole transaction was an ironical drama, and such an one, too, that the infamous abuse might be readily perceived through the pretended glorification. The staff must be a reed, the symbol of impotence; the crown must injure and pierce the brow; and so too must the purple present the symbol of miserable, pretended greatness; and this was done by its being an old camp-mantle."

But how, through all this, God was working, to turn all to the bringing out His glory as infinitely higher than that of earthly potentates, we may surely see clearly.

they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him; and they lead him out to crucify him.

2 (21-32): Crucified.

2. And they [k]impress a certain man passing by, Simon, a Cyrenian, coming from the field, the father of Alexander and Rufus, that he might bear his cross. And they bring him to the place [l]Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, the place of a skull. And they offered him [m]wine mingled with myrrh, but he received it not. And they crucify him, and [n]part his garments among them, casting lots on them what each should take. And it was the [o]third hour, and they crucified him. And the [p]superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

And with him they crucify [q]two robbers; one on his right hand, and one on his left. [And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, [r]And he was reckoned with transgressors].* And they that passed by [s]railed upon him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ha! thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross. In like manner the [t]chief priests also, with the scribes, mocking among themselves, said, He [u]saved others; himself he cannot save. Let the Christ, the king of Israel, now come down from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified [v]with him reproached him.

k Matt. 27. 32. Lk. 23. 26. *cf.* Jno. 19. 17. *cf.* Phil. 3. 10.
l Matt. 27. 33. Lk. 23. 33. Jno. 19. 17. *cf.* Heb. 13. 11-13.
m Matt. 27. 34. *cf.* Ps. 69. 21. Lk. 23. 36. *cf.* Jno. 19. 28-30.
n Matt. 27. 35. Lk. 23. 34. Jno. 19. 23, 24. Ps. 22. 18. *cf.* Phil. 3. 9.
o *cf.* Matt. 27. 45. *cf.* Lk. 23. 44. *cf.* Jno. 19. 14.
p Matt. 27. 37. Lk 23. 38. Jno. 19. 19-22. *cf.* Gen. 22. 13 with Ps. 132. 17.
q Matt. 27. 38. Lk. 23. 32, 33. Jno. 19. 18. *cf.* Is. 53. 9.

* Perhaps to be omitted.

r Is. 53. 12; Lk. 22. 37. s Ps. 22. 7; Ps. 69. 12; Matt. 27. 39, 40. t Matt. 27. 41-44; Lk. 23. 35; *ctr.* Heb. 4. 15. u. *cf.* Jno. 3. 14, 15 with Heb. 9. 22. v *cf.* Lk. 23. 39-43 with 1 Tim. 1. 13.

that was heaven's side, the consequence of sin laid upon Him, the hiding of the face of God from Him,—for *us* heaven opened.

These are both *royal* colors also, as we plainly see; the scarlet of Matthew and the purple of Mark, just as the crown of thorns, the crown of curse, for Him was really a crown. The Sufferer reigns as that, in the Kingdom peculiarly His; and so only could He have, among the sinners of man's race, such a throne as could satisfy Him.

2. The impressment of Simon the Cyrenian upon the road, to bear His cross, is recorded here, as in Matthew; but with an addition here which shows Simon, the "hearkener" and cross bearer, as the father of Alexander and Rufus, God's grace being fruitful in him. Is not this the true way of fruitfulness ever, to hearken and bear the cross?

Golgotha, the place of a skull, is reached, and then the vinegar and gall are offered Him, only to be rejected: Mark gives "wine mingled with myrrh;" the former, the sour wine of common use, much like vinegar; the latter is probably a different thing from "gall," which would hardly seem a fitting term to describe it. The parting of His garments, according to the view that has been given of it,* is as naturally found in all the Gospels as the particularization as to it suits and is found in John. The mockery of the bystanders, and especially of the heads of the people is given almost exactly as in Matthew.

3. And now from the sixth to the ninth hour, there falls a darkness over all the land. We have already considered its meaning generally, but every partic-

* See Notes on Matthew.

3 (33-38): The opening of the sanctuary.

3. And when the sixth hour was come, there was [w] darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus [z] cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias. And one ran and, filling a sponge with [y] vinegar, put it upon a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let be; let us see whether Elias cometh to take him down. And Jesus, having uttered a [z] loud cry, expired. And the [a] veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

4 (39-41): Impending changes.

4. And when the [b] centurion who stood by over against him, saw that he so cried out and expired, he said, Truly this man was Son of God.

w Matt. 27. 45. Lk. 23. 44, 45. *cf.* 1 Jno. 1. 5 with 2 Cor. 5. 21.
x Matt. 27. 46–49. Ps. 22. 1. *cf.* Is. 53. 5, 6.
y *cf.* ver. 23.
z Matt. 27. 50. Lk. 23. 46. *cf.* Jno. 10. 17, 18.
a Matt. 27. 51. Lk. 23. 45. *cf.* Heb. 10. 19, 20.
b Matt. 27. 54. Lk. 23. 47; *cf.* Deut. 32. 31.

ular specified has surely its importance. The *three* hours, as such, speak naturally of the manifestation of what is hidden, and may most simply speak of the opening of the sanctuary, which takes place at its close. It is the blood of the sin-offering which on the day of atonement in Israel opened it for the moment to let in the high priest, the representative of the people. But that was but for a moment: the characteristic of the legal dispensation was in the veil which hung continuously before the presence of God, so that from man's point of view He dwelt in the thick darkness. It was a darkness forbidding man's approach, and speaking of sin unmet, spite of the hecatombs of victims dying for it. And the true Sacrifice having now come, He must find His way through the darkness, laden with the sin which had forced God thus into distance from the creature of His love.

The three hours of darkness were to Him the measure of what to any other would have been an infinite hopeless distance. The cry of desertion interpreted the darkness. The veil rent from top to bottom proclaimed that it was traversed and removed. The *sixth* hour speaks of the barrier-limit reached; the *ninth*, of perfected manifestation.

The agonizing question shows the nature of the darkness, which is not outward but within upon His soul. The quotation from the twenty-second psalm gives us the clue to find the answer which the psalm gives to the question. If a holy God is to abide among the praises of a people taken from among sinful men, He under the weight of that sin must declare that holiness in God's judgment of it. God is glorified in this redemption-work beyond the possibility of all man's sin to cloud again for ever. The light bursts forth now, and as never yet. God is *in* the light. The separating veil is rent from top to bottom.

To the mockers around the cross, the darkness is as dense as ever. They exclaim that He is calling for Elias. And while one brings to Him upon a reed the vinegar for His thirst, he joins in the cry they raise, to wait and see if Elias will come to take Him down. But Jesus cries again with a loud voice, and expires.

Through all this account we have already seen how, by the omission of particulars recorded by Matthew, Mark emphasizes the sin-offering character of Christ's sacrifice.* But there are positive testimonies, also, that we have noted. And now, as we go on to the after events of the book, we shall find the same character attaching to it, until we see the glorious Risen Man seated in heaven at the right hand of God. The veil is passed, but never closed again: He is gone in, our Fore-runner, and we walk in the light as God is in the light.

4. Before we have left the Cross and its glory of sorrow, intimation is given of victories which it is to achieve, and changes resultant. The first voice, save

*See Introduction, pp. 26-28.

And there were [c]women also looking on from afar; among whom were both Mary of Magdala, and Mary the mother of James the younger, and of Joses, and Salome: who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him; and many other women who came up with him unto Jerusalem.

c Matt. 27. 55, 56. Lk. 23. 27-31, 49. Jno. 19. 25. *cf.* ch. 16. 1.

5 (42-47): Governmental working of God.

5. And when even was now come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, there came [d]Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable councilor, who himself also awaited the kingdom of God; and he went in boldly unto Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. And Pilate wondered whether he were already dead; and calling the centurion, he inquired of him if he had been any while dead. And when he had learned it of the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. And having bought a linen cloth, he took him down, and swathed him in the linen cloth, and laid him in a [e]sepulcre which had been hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the sepulcre. And Mary of Magdala and Mary the [mother] of Joses beheld where he was laid.

d Matt. 27. 57-61. Lk. 23. 50-56. Jno. 19. 38-42. *cf.* Matt. 20. 6, 9.

e *cf.* Is. 53. 9. *cf.* Josh. 3. 4.

that of the dying robber, which, in the midst of Jewish blasphemy and dishonor, owns the supreme glory of the Son of God, is that of the Gentile centurion. Christ already has His own among the uncircumcised, the beginning of the great host that are soon to follow Him.

Then this company of ministering women gathered by His cross, and to be the first heralds of His victory over death, is not without significance. "The Lord gave the word; great was the company of the women that published it" (Ps. lxviii. 11). The victory is so achieved, that not the men of might are needed, but the feebleness of women was abundantly enough. Indeed the men of might, the fighters on the Lord's behalf, had not found their hands. But now the battle was over: He had fought alone, and of the people there were none with Him: with the last great shout of the battle-field, the cry of victory and not of exhaustion, He had entered into His rest. The women are now free to minister. The shadow of the Cross is but the shadow of the sheltering wings of divine love.

It is this victory-shout which, according to Mark, impresses the soldier: "when the centurion saw that He so cried out and expired, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God." He had seen death upon the battlefield, perhaps in many a shape, but never a death like this. If we take John's account, it is the cry that has rung through so many hearts since then, *Tetelestai*, "It is finished." If it be not the great cry itself, it certainly went with it; and how has that become for Gentile faith the gospel-utterance! It has assured of peace made with God, stilled to rest the tumult of other things, and subdued the heart to Jesus, to the Son of God who loved and gave Himself for the sons of men.

5. "They assigned Him His grave with wicked men; but with the rich man when He had died." So had Isaiah long before predicted, and now we have the fulfilment of it. The malefactor's grave which would have naturally followed the death of the cross could not be permitted Him. That substitutionary work was accomplished which alone had made Him to be numbered with transgressors. In that character He could appear no more; and the righteousness of God, which He had declared in His death, claimed now divine intervention in His behalf. While He yet slept He must sleep in honor, and as it has been well said, the One born of a Virgin-womb could only be fittingly honored in a

SUBDIVISION 3.

Resurrection, and Heaven really opened.

1 (1-8): Promise, yet barren.

1. AND when the [f]sabbath was now past, Mary of Magdala, and Mary the [mother] of James, and Salome, bought spices that they might come and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, they come to the sepulcre when the sun was risen. And they said one to another, [g]Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulcre? And looking up, they see that the stone is rolled away: for it was exceeding great. And entering into the sepulcre, they saw a [h]young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a white robe: and they were astounded. And he saith unto them, Be not astounded; ye seek Jesus, the Nazarene, the crucified. He is [i]risen, he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. But go, tell

[f] Matt. 28.1, etc. Lk.24.1,etc. Jno. 20. 1, etc.

[g] Matt.28.2. *cf.*Ex.14.13 -16.

[h] Lk. 24. 4. *cf.* Jno. 20. 12, 13. *cf.* Acts 1. 10, 11. *cf.*1 Tim.3. 16.

[i] Matt. 28.6. Lk. 24. 5-7. 1 Cor. 15.3-8.

virgin-tomb. He who could not see corruption, could not lie in a tomb which corruption had defiled. Thus all was in harmony, and God silently controlling all things before visible intervention could take place. Joseph of Arimathea, inspired with a boldness he had not yet shown, goes in to Pilate and asks of him the body of Jesus. Pilate, finding from the centurion that He is indeed already dead, commands it to be given; and in the new tomb, awaiting its predicted resurrection on the third day, that sacred body rests.

SUBD. 3.

As every one knows, doubt has been cast upon the authenticity of the last twelve verses of this Gospel; and if they are, as Meyer calls them, but an "apocryphal fragment," a waif without parentage known, introduced into Mark we know not how, to mend the ragged end of his mutilated or unfinished work, doubt would naturally be cast on more than its authenticity, and most of all for those who are slow to believe in inspiration moving after this fashion. We need not, however, discuss it here, as the authority for the full text is abundant in both MSS. and Versions. The spiritual relationship of the closing verses to the Gospel as a whole is perfect; and this, if proved, is a better argument of itself in favor of authenticity than all besides that has ever been produced against it.

Moreover there is reason of an internal kind for the difference that in fact exists between the two parts of this last chapter,—the first, which gives the promise from the (unseen) Lord to meet His disciples in Galilee: a promise of which Mark gives no fulfilment: while the second briefly relates His actual appearances in and around Jerusalem, and His sending them forth with signs attesting their commission to preach the gospel in all the world. These two parts we have now to consider in their scope and connection with one another.

1. In the first part we have then promise which, *as far as Mark's account of it goes*, is not fulfilled. Jesus does not meet them in Galilee; and the end for them, the account closing abruptly, is in fear and trembling, rather than the joy and gladness we should have expected from it.

If, then, nothing is without a purpose here (and we at least are not going to question this), there must be for us some meaning in this non-fulfilment, this fear instead of joy. If we think, also, of the disciples as what they were undoubtedly till after (and a good while after) the resurrection,—a Jewish remnant, with hopes still clustering round the Old Testament promises, we can see something very like what Mark pictures here. Christ is come, Christ is risen; there is a promise for believing Israelites which to them as such is not fulfilled; and in short their history, and that of the ministry to the circumcision, with which especially is connected Peter's name (ver. 7, Gal. ii. 7, 9), is just such a

his disciples and [j] Peter, [that] he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. And they went out and fled from the sepulcre; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them. And they said nothing to any one, for they were [k] afraid.

2 (9-18): The witness of salvation.

2. Now when he was risen early on the first day of the week, he appeared [l] first to Mary of Magdala, out of whom he had cast seven demons. She went and told those that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they heard that he was alive and had been seen of her, [m] disbelieved.

And after these things he was [n] manifested in another form to two of them, as they walked on their way into the country. And they went and told it to the rest; neither believed they them.

j cf. ch. 14. 71. cf. Lk. 24. 47.

k cf. Matt. 28. 5. cf. Lk. 24. 36–40.

l Jno. 20. 11–18. cf. Lk. 7. 42, 43. cf. 1 Cor. 15. 8, 9.

m. Lk. 24. 10, 11.

n. Lk. 24. 13–35.

broken fragment as is here presented to us. It will be completed, but only in another dispensation, after the parenthesis of the Church's history shall be over, and the "remnant of" the King's "brethren shall return to the children of Israel" (Mic. v. 3): that is, when Israelites converted to God shall again be partakers in the hopes and promises of the nation.

This, I doubt not, is what is intimated in the first verses of Mark's closing chapter. We shall find similar things in the close of John's Gospel, and more fully brought out there: things hard to be uttered, indeed, when the meaning, even of divine history, is so generally considered to be merely in the letter, and when belief in the inspiration of God's word—in any proper sense of inspiration—is being so largely given up. That cannot affect the truth itself, nor its importance for those that have ears to hear.

2. The second part begins once more with the resurrection, and is of another character. Here the Lord Himself appears, and first to one who had been delivered from the power of Satan, which had completely possessed her. This supremacy of power over the whole array of the enemy—seven demons—characterizes the full salvation which is now to be proclaimed. The message given her we find only in John; here only that at first it was disbelieved. The very men who are to be the heralds of it in the world are at first incredulous as to what they long to receive. As Luke says of what took place afterwards, "they believed not for joy": it was, according to the common phrase, "too good to be true."

The appearance to the two on the road to Emmaus, next referred to, is still incompetent to bring conviction; and the Lord then Himself appears to the eleven—the company now spoken of as that number, though Thomas, as we know, was not among them at the first,—and upbraids them with their unbelief and hardness of heart.

The commission that follows is entirely different from that in Matthew, though some have represented it as but another version of it. They were given at different times and places clearly; while they reflect each the character of its respective Gospel. Matthew, whose subject is the Kingdom, gives the mode of reception into it by baptism and teaching. This supposes Mark's commission as being already acted on,—the "what shall we do?" of those already wrought upon by the good news proclaimed. Mark's view of the sin-offering is the basis of the gospel: this blessed work accomplished, the going forth of the good news naturally results.

Faith, therefore, which is implied in the commission in Matthew, is insisted on here: "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." On the other hand, "he that disbelieveth"—no baptism affecting the case of such an one—"shall be condemned."

And [o]afterwards he was manifested unto the eleven themselves, as they were at table, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not those who had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, [p]Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation: he that [q]believeth and is [r]baptized shall be saved; and he that disbelieveth shall be condemned. And these [s]signs shall follow them that believe: in my name they shall cast out [t]demons; they shall speak with new [u]tongues; they shall take up [v]serpents; and if they [w]drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them at all; they shall lay hands on the [x]sick, and they shall recover.

o Lk. 24.36-45. Jno. 20 19, 20.
p Matt. 28. 18-20. *cf.* Lk. 24.46-49. *cf.* Jno. 20. 21-23.
q *cf.* Acts 13. 38, 39.
r *cf.* Acts 16. 30-34.
s *cf.* Acts 4. 29-31. *cf.* Acts. 5. 12.
t *cf.* Acts 16. 18.
u *cf.* Acts 2. 4, etc. v *cf.* Acts 28. 3-6. w *cf.* 2 Ki. 4. 39-41. x *cf.* Acts 9. 32-35.

The signs that follow those who believe introduce us into a region of controversy in different quarters. It is plain, however, that even in the apostles' days they were not signs which necessarily followed in every individual. "Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues?" implies the negative. But the apostle asks moreover, "Are all workers of miracles?"—any kind of miracles?—and this must have a similar answer (1 Cor. xii. 29, 30).

Here then is what at once destroys any argument founded upon the universality of such gifts as these. It could not be said of any Christians that as such they would have them. The question was a much simpler one,—a question of fact: who have them? who have them not? If no one in a generation had them, we could not say they ought to have had, according to the Lord's words. As "signs," the apostle's words as to one of them might apply to others, or to all, "wherefore tongues are for a *sign*, not to those that believe, but to those that believe not" (1 Cor. xiv. 22); and if unbelievers ceased, we might even *expect* that these would cease.

But miracles do not produce faith; though they may produce conviction. Those who "believed in His Name when they saw the miracles that He did," He "did not commit Himself to, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for He knew what was in man" (John ii. 23-25). It was but an intellectual conviction, quite possible to men without divine work at all; so that if this were accomplished—if only the gospel were going out amidst a people who accepted Christianity as true—one still would not expect these signs to follow.

Thus we are brought very near to the actual condition of things that obtains in Christendom to-day. Nor do the Lord's words make that condition a hard matter to reconcile with them. The signs *did* follow, and fulfilled the object for which they were designed. As Christianity became known, and the truth came to get hearing, the miraculous accompaniments ceased, after the manner of all such whenever their purpose was fulfilled. Miracles have always been temporary, gathering around certain crises in the divine history of mankind, times of special divine intervention, and then passing away; and Christianity is no exception to the rule. As to power for conviction, where the word of God is once fairly before men, the Lord Himself has assured us that, if they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

That which comes first among these signs has special significance. Satan had possessed himself of the world largely by means of the religions of men, the perversions of that original worship which through successive generations became ever more corrupt. "The things which the Gentiles sacrifice," says the apostle; "they sacrifice to demons, and not to God" (1 Cor. x. 20). And as in Egypt, when God brought out His people, the delivering judgments fell upon their gods, so now in Christianity. "They shall cast out demons in My Name"

3 (19, 20): The return to God.

3. The Lord, therefore, after he had spoken unto them, was [y]taken up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord [z]working with them and confirming the word with signs following.

[y] Lk. 24.50-53. *cf.* Eph. 4.8-10.
[z] *cf.* Acts 3. 13 with Heb. 2. 4. *cf.* 2 Tim. 4. 16. 17.

is the proclamation of Christ's supremacy over the religious rulers of the heathen world.

The gift of new tongues was grace surmounting the judgment of Babel, while yet the primitive "one speech and one language" could not be restored.

The taking up of serpents and the innocuousness of any deadly draught would fence round life from the insidious attack of the destroyer; while the miraculous healings were a manifestation of power over the power of death in others. All together testified to the Lord's victory over Satan, over death, and over sin: for sin was that which gave power to both death and Satan. Nothing could affect these which had not gone to the bottom of the question of sin.

Thus, then, were the messengers of salvation equipped for their work.

3. And now, His end achieved, the shadow taken from the face of God, the sanctuary opened to all seekers of Him, the Servant-Son returns up where He was before. But He returns not *as* He was before. He returns with the humanity that He has taken: sure pledge that though He has changed the sphere of His service, the service itself He has not given up. He takes humanity itself up to the throne of God, and sits down there with it at the right hand of God.

He has been in the lowest place: He receives the highest. It is the same Gospel which fitly shows Him to us in both. The blood of the sin-offering opens the sanctuary; but more, He who has shed it has entered heaven in the power of it; has entered it a Man, and with this link of Manhood connecting Him thus with others who are men, and for whom He offered Himself.

The consequences of this are not pursued in this Gospel. They must be sought in after-communications of divine grace, which has traced for us His path step by step from lowest humiliation to glory, and how we are concerned in every step. The place at the right hand of God is, of course, peculiar to Himself; but not only does His heart still abide with His people here, but His hand also works for them and with them; and thus Mark presents Him at the close as One whose love makes Him still the Servant of man's need. For "they went forth, and preached everywhere, the *Lord working with them*, and confirming the word with signs following."

SCOPE AND DIVISIONS OF LUKE.

LUKE'S Gospel gives us "the face of a Man," which naturally connects, therefore, with the numerical place of the Gospel, the number of "manifestation." In no other of the Synoptics are we brought so near God, or is God so unveiled to us, as witness the fifteenth chapter. This connects necessarily with the peace-offering character of Christ's work, the fruit of atonement as seen in the previous Gospels. The shadow is gone from off the face of God.

The "face of a man" goes beyond this, however: for manhood is that which the Son of God has assumed to Himself, not simply to accomplish our redemption, but as for ever the Head of humanity in new creation. All the blessed results are indeed not yet unfolded; but the Person is here who owns and acts towards His people in all the human sympathy and affection of such relationship. His manhood is emphasized in all the reality of weakness and dependence, His birth and childhood, growing in wisdom as in stature, frequent in prayer; amid all, perfect in obedience, a unique spectacle on earth, so that God's "good pleasure in men," of which the angels unjealously speak, is justified and necessitated. Here God and man meet; with blessing for man which fills heart and life with answering praise.

Even from the Cross, as we contemplate it here, the supreme agony is departed. There is no cry of abandonment; "My God!" is exchanged for "Father." He prays for His murderers; He gives peace to the dying sinner at His side. Salvation is an accomplished thing throughout the book; grace, peace, remission of sins, are proclaimed everywhere in it.

There are three divisions only:—

1. (Chaps. i.–iv. 13): The unique obedient Man.
2. (Chaps. iv. 14–xviii. 34): A Saviour and His salvation.
3. (Chaps. xviii. 35–xxiv.): Restoration, its hindrances and accomplishment, and the peace-offering work by which man is brought nigh.

NOTES.

Div. 1.

THE Person of the Lord is that which is set before us in the first division: the truth, but also the uniqueness of His manhood, born of a virgin mother by the power of the Spirit of God; unique also in the perfection of that obedience, "tempted in all things as we are, apart from sin." It is evident that this is put before us—the reality of what He is—as neither of the previous Gospels develops it. Matthew dwells rather upon His dignity as the Ruler of the people of God. Mark declares Him to be the Son of God, but passes on then immediately to His service, speaking neither of His birth nor human parentage save incidentally at an after-time. John dwells upon His deity, the Word made flesh, the *Only*-begotten of the Father, where He has no brethren. All in it speaks of contrast rather than human kinship, though Man He truly is. But Luke presents the *First*-born, which of necessity implies brethren,—the One born of the Spirit, as we are *new*-born of the Spirit: an immense difference, surely, but which yet gives the connection declared by the apostle (Heb. ii. 11), that "both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause," he adds, "He is not ashamed to call them 'brethren.'"

The link is not between the Lord as Man and men in general. It was not true as some say, that in becoming Man He became flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone. It is we, His people, who are flesh of *His* flesh and bone of *His* bone (Eph. v. 30). For this also death had to come in: for "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone" (John xii. 24); and it was in the deep sleep fallen upon Adam, the image of such death-sleep, that Eve was taken out of his side (Gen. ii. 21–23).

Thus it is the Sanctifier and the sanctified that are all of one; and yet here also, as already said, there is a difference that is of immense importance. Truly Man as Christ was, and even the Son of man, the power of the Spirit preserved that pure humanity which He took in the virgin's womb from the slightest taint or consequence of evil. Naturally, He was only "that Holy Thing," a "Second Man," unfallen; and more, by virtue of His divine nature, never separable from His humanity, "of heaven" (1 Cor. xv. 47)—a heavenly Man.

We must remember, however, that for the doctrine of all this we must go beyond Luke, and indeed, gather from Scripture generally. As we do so, the gospel of the Manhood will more and more reveal to us the Person about whom these texts and truths gather in a constantly increasing radiance of glory. For Scripture has its central theme in Him, even as "all things were created by Him and for Him." His word is as His work, in all parts testifying to Himself.

Luke shows us the perfect Man, welcoming the searching eyes of a hostile world to prove Him; challenging those who gladly would, to find Him aught but the unblemished One; while God commits Himself to Him absolutely as the One in whom He has found His perfect satisfaction and delight. Yet He is not only in the flesh, but "in the *likeness* of *sinful* flesh" (Rom. viii. 3). He is in wilderness circumstances, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" never sheltering Himself, by the power of the divinity that was in Him, from the common lot of men; never pleading the exemption due to His perfection, from any trial known to man: nay, upon a path which led ever downwards to the lowest humiliation, to death and the place of the Cross. All this was made the means of the fullest possible display of an obedience to God which had no limit, —of a love which Godward was the spring of such obedience, to men an unreserved devotedness· "the good Shepherd," laying down His life for the sheep.

These sheep are wanderers, and He must seek them, if they are to be His own. They must be won out of the ways of sin, made to know His voice, the work of His love done in them. Thus He is the Sanctifier; thus they are sanctified. And this work is shown in Luke as in neither of the former Gospels, though it could not, of course, be omitted in any. But with "Luke, the be-

LUKE.

DIVISION 1. (Chaps. i.–iv. 13.)

The Unique Obedient Man.

SUBDIVISION 1. (Chap. i.)

Divine promise fulfilling in sovereign grace.

1 (1–4): The purpose: certainty by sufficient knowledge.

1. FORASMUCH as [a]many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning the things fulfilled among us, as they [b]handed them down to us who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having traced all things accurately from the first, to write

[a] Matt. 1. 1. Mk. 1. 1. Jno. 1. 1. *cf.* Acts 1. 1.
[b] Heb. 2. 3, 4. *cf.* 1 Jno. 1. 1. *cf.* Acts 1. 21, 22.

loved physician," the remedy for the sin-sick souls must needs have a great place; and so will any acquaintance with the blessed book before us realize it to have in it abundantly the revelation of God's method with all spiritual diseases: the voice of recall and recovery to God sounds everywhere through it.

SUBD. 1.

In the first subdivision we find the events immediately preceding and in relation with the birth of Christ. In them, in the midst of the ruin in which Israel is found (and Israel is but what man is: there is no exceptional betterness that can be claimed for any), God is seen working in pursuance of long-declared purposes, and in sovereign grace. The names of two of those who come before us in the first place in this account are highly significant in this respect. The first is Zacharias, "Jah has remembered"; his wife's name is Elisabeth, the same as Elisheba, "God has sworn." And in his song of praise Zacharias puts these things together. "Blessed be the Lord"—or Jehovah (of which Jah is a contracted form)—"for He has wrought redemption . . . to *remember* His holy covenant: the *oath* that He *sware* to our father Abraham." Thus is He declared, then, to be acting here.

Thus the spring of all blessing is in God Himself, who from the beginning has pledged Himself in His grace to men, that they might know and so have confidence in it. Thus the New Testament begins for us, with its roots in the Old, new indeed in the fulness of its blessing. He comes who is to bring in the blessing, into whose hands all that concerns human interests and the glory of God can be entrusted without fear. Yet it is Man that is to undertake for man: the Seed of the woman is to bruise the serpent's head; Man is to glorify God where man has dishonored Him; and goodness is to triumph, not by other might but by its own.

1. The introduction to the Gospel is remarkable as showing the unity of thought that runs through the book, even in parts where naturally we should not expect it. Luke's is the Gospel of the Manhood; and "the face of a man" greets us in the opening lines. The human purpose is accomplished in a thoroughly human way, and without the claim of anything more than human. Others have taken in hand to put forth narratives of the events which have been fulfilled among men of late, and which have been handed down to them by eye-witnesses who were also specially accredited as ministers of the Word. The attempts themselves show the desirability of giving permanent form to what as tradition was liable so soon to change and to perversion. The writer had given special attention to this subject, and had traced out all things accurately from the first. He writes therefore to his brother-Christian Theophilus, that he might have certainty about the things in which as a Christian he had been instructed.

unto thee in order, most noble Theophilus, that thou mightest [c]know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.

[c] *cf.* Jno. 20. 29-31. *cf.* 2 Pet. 1. 16.

He claims no commission from the Lord to write his Gospel. He sees a want existing which he is competent to supply, and he supplies it. He does not even speak or think apparently of writing for the Church as a whole, or what would meet the general need. It is for Theophilus. He says nothing of inspiration. Divine love in him sets him to do what he can to establish in the faith one in whom he is interested; and in result he has written what the whole Church has owned to be of God for all.

It is a beautiful example of how naturally the Spirit of God works, or may work, in what we term inspiration. The instrument He uses is not like a mere pen in the hand of another. He is a man acting freely—for "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty"—as if from his own heart and mind alone. He uses all the means he has got, and uses them diligently. You are quite prepared to find in his work the character of the writer: why should not He who has prepared the instrument, use it according to the quality of that which He has prepared? Why should He set aside the mind which He has furnished, any more than the affections of the heart which He has endowed? Why, too, should He who fed the multitudes from the loaves and fishes already provided, set aside what the zeal and diligence of the disciple had "accurately traced out"? It was that before-made provision which the Lord blessed and which common men after their own fashion distributed; and who shall tell us *just what* it was, wondrous as was the change, that the blessing of the Lord had added to it?

The Author of nature is not jealous of nature: He is Lord of it. Amid laws that He has imposed on it, He moves freely, working His own will, so that we are apt to ask, Where is He? when we should ask, Where is He *not*? And, even when the greatness of the work accomplished demonstrates that here is the Almighty Worker, we look at the ease and simplicity of the accomplishment, and wonder how can it be He?

This is the lesson of Luke's introduction; so suited as an introduction to the One who comes to us with the face of a Man, and speaks to us with a human tongue. As is He, so is His word: in which also the human element misread has been made to banish or diminish the divine; to put God into the distance, instead of bringing Him completely nigh.

Luke says nothing explicitly of inspiration; but he knows the power of what he has to communicate to give *certainty* as to the Christian verities: a certainty which clearly neither tradition for more than a first generation or so could give, nor an inaccurate, however well-intentioned, account of them. This is the ground of his own writing: he has traced out "accurately" all things from the first. How short a time it was that this tradition had existed! Luke was himself the companion of Paul the apostle; yet already it was needful to take measures for giving a settled form to it, and trace out things accurately. We can see that he has not claimed as much as he has really done: for he has given us one part of a fourfold history of Christ, furnishing together what we need to know of Him in all His various value for the soul. He has pictured for us among these the *Man*, Christ Jesus, distinct from all other views, yet absolutely accordant; pursuing the line of truth entrusted to him with a simplicity of purpose which moulds every part of his Gospel; while the fulness of divine grace in it speaks and will ever speak as from the full heart of God to men.

One thing we must add to this, which naturally connects with it, that we have in Luke the first and only Gentile writer, that we are aware of, in the Bible; and that he writes to Theophilus, evidently another Gentile; by the title of "most noble" applied to him, as to Festus by the apostle (Acts xxvi. 25), still or recently in some similar position of honor. Thus the gospel was going out among the heathen while Israel had turned the back upon it. Here was grace indeed in its fullest expression; and it is characteristic of what is presented to us here.

power, save that he laid his hands upon a few infirm persons, and [p] healed them. And [q] he marvelled at their unbelief. And he [r] went round about the villages, teaching.

2 (7-13): the ministry by which His personal testimony is extended.

[2] And he called unto him the twelve, and began to [s] send them out [t] two and two; and gave them [u] authority over the unclean spirits; and he charged them that they should take [v] nothing for the way, save a staff only: no bread, no wallet, no money in their girdle; but be [w] shod with sandals, and not put on two coats. And he said unto them, Wherever ye enter into a house, there abide till ye depart thence. And whatsoever place shall not receive you nor hear you, when ye depart thence, [x] shake off the dust that is under your feet for a witness unto them. And they went out and preached that men should [y] repent. And they cast out many demons, and [z] anointed with oil many infirm, and healed them.

2 (14-29): Opposition to man's lusts and the hatred it awakens.

2. And [a] Herod the king heard [of him], for his name had become known; and he said, John the Baptist is [b] risen from among the dead, and therefore do these powers put forth energy in him. But others said, It is [c] Elias. And others said, It is a prophet, as one of the prophets. But when Herod heard [of him] he said, It is John whom I beheaded: he is risen. For Herod

p *cf.* ch. 7. 24, 25.
q *ctr.* Matt. 8. 10-12. *cf.* Is. 59. 16.
r Matt. 9. 35. Acts 10. 38. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 21.
s Matt. 10. 1, etc. ch. 3. 13. 14. Lk. 9. 1-6. *cf.* Matt. 28. 19, 20.
t *cf.* Deut. 19. 15. *cf.* Jno. 8. 17. *cf.* Rev. 11. 3, 4. *cf.* Eccl. 4. 9-12. *cf.* 2 Tim. 4. 9-11.
u *cf.* Lk. 10. 17-20. *cf.* Acts 16. 16-18. *ctr.* Acts 19. 13 20.
v *cf.* Lk. 22. 35. *cf.* 3 Jno. 5-8. *cf.* 1 Cor. 9. 7-19.
w *cf.* Eph. 6. 15.
x Lk. 10. 10, 11. Acts 13. 51.

Acts 18. 6; *cf.* Acts 28. 24-29. y *cf.* Matt. 4. 17; *ctr.* Acts 13. 38, 39. z *cf.* Jas. 5. 14, 15; *cf.* Acts 1. 8. a Matt. 14. 1-12; Lk. 9. 7-9. b *cf.* Acts 17. 31. c Matt. 16. 14; ch. 8. 28.

exemplification of a common rule, that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country and among his own kindred. Human nature is, alas, consistent enough in evil to warrant such general statements: for "as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man."

In the face of this, as Mark above all emphasizes, the Servant of divine love, able to do little because of an unbelief at which He marveled, patiently did this—"laid His hands on a few infirm persons and healed them"—and seeking yet the way to their hearts, "went round about their villages, teaching." How the perfect manhood of the Lord comes out, and is *meant* to come out, in this account. The divine glory that is His must not obscure the reality of that which appeals so powerfully to us in the tender human fashion in which the Son of God has come down to minister to men.

[2] He sends out now also the twelve, in extension of His personal testimony; two and two, the number of competent witness, and doubtless for mutual help. Mark emphasizes here as elsewhere the power over unclean spirits which is given them, over the dark and dreadful enemy of men, out of whose clutch they have to be rescued. They are sent forth in such a way as shall manifest in all this their absolute dependence upon Himself,—without provision either of food or money. They are to be shod with sandals, not the more luxurious "shoes;" and not to wear two coats. They are to be content also with what accommodation they find in the first house opening its doors to them; while, on the other hand, judgment is denounced on every place that will not receive nor hearken to a testimony accredited by divine power.

With their message, and with this sanction put upon it, they accordingly go forth.

2. We are taken back now to see the death of the Lord's forerunner, in which His own is not obscurely intimated. Herod, indeed, we are told, alarmed by his guilty conscience, when he hears of the miracles wrought by Jesus, sup-

himself had sent forth and [d]laid hold on John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not [e]lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. And [f]Herodias kept it against him, and would have killed him, but could not: for Herod [g]feared John, knowing that he was a righteous man, and holy, and he protected him; and when he heard him he did many things,* and heard him [h]gladly. And when a [i]favorable day was come and Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, and captains of thousands, and the chief men of Galilee, the daughter of the said Herodias came in and [j]danced and pleased Herod and those that were at table with him. And the king said unto the damsel, [k]Ask what thou wilt of me and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went out, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And [l]she said, The head of John the Baptist. And immediately she went in with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me forthwith upon a dish the head of John the Baptist. And the king was exceeding [m]sorry; but for his oaths' sake, and [n]those who sat with [him] at table, he would not break his word with her. And immediately the king sent forth a soldier of the guard and commanded to bring his head. And he went and beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head upon a dish, and gave it to the damsel; and the damsel gave it to her mother. And when his [o]disciples heard [of it], they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

3 (30-45): Divine fulness manifested for the satisfaction of need.

3. And the apostles [p]gather themselves unto Jesus; and they told him all things, whatsoever they had done, and whatsoever they had taught. And he saith unto them, Come ye yourselves [q]apart into a desert place and rest awhile. For there were many coming and going, and they had not leisure even to eat. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

d Lk. 3. 19, 20. *cf.* Jer. 26. 1-15. *cf.* Jer. 32. 2. *cf.* 1 Ki. 22. 8, 27, 28.
e Lev. 18. 16. *cf.* Jer. 1. 7-10.
f *cf.* Prov. 9. 7, 8. *cf.* Prov. 15, 12. *cf.* Amos 5. 10. *ctr.* 2 Sa. 12. 1-14 with Ps. 141. 5.
g *cf.* Acts 24. 24, 25. *cf.* 2 Cor. 7. 10.
h *cf.* Matt. 13. 5, 20. *ctr.* Acts 2. 41.
i *cf.* Gen. 40. 20. *cf.* Matt. 26. 16. *cf.* Dan. 5. 1, 2.
j *cf.* Amos 6. 3-6.
k *cf.* Esth. 5. 3, 6. *cf.* Esth. 7. 2. *ctr.* 1 Jno. 5. 14, 15.
l *cf.* Eccl. 7. 26. *cf.* Gen. 39. 17-20. *cf.* Acts 7. 51-54.
m *cf.* Matt. 27. 3, 4. *cf.* Dan. 4. 27.
n *cf.* Prov. 29. 25.
o *cf.* Jno. 1. 35-37. *cf.* Jno. 3. 29, 30.
p Lk. 9. 10. Matt. 14. 13, 14.
q Matt. 12. 15.

* R. V., following a well supported reading, renders this "was much perplexed." The context however is against this, and good authority gives the reading of the text.

poses him to be the Baptist, risen from the dead. Thereupon the awful story of lust and hate is given us with very little variation from what we have had in Matthew. It completes the rejection which Nazareth has shown us already, wedding the lusts of the flesh in unholy union with the pride of life. It binds together the world and its rulers in opposition to the throne of heaven, and its claims and grace alike. This is the world in which nevertheless God is to be glorified as nowhere else, and to reap a spiritual harvest which shall show forth the exceeding riches of His grace to the principalities and powers in heavenly places.

3. The Lord retires into the wilderness, the type of the world in the condition to which sin has reduced it, in the Old Testament as well as in the New. Here

And many saw them going and knew [them], and ran there together on foot out of all the cities, and outwent them. And he came forth and saw a great multitude, and he had [r]compassion on them because they were as sheep that had no shepherd; and he began to [s]teach them many things. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him and said, The place is desert, and the day is now far spent: [t]send them away that they may go into the country and villages round about, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat. But he answered and said to them, [u]Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread and give them to eat? And he saith unto them, [v]How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes. And he commanded them that all should [w]recline in companies upon the green grass. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds and by fifties. And he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he [x]blessed and brake the loaves, and gave to the disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all. And they all ate and were [y]filled. And they took up of [z]broken pieces twelve hand-baskets full, and of the fishes. And they that ate of the loaves were five thousand men. And immediately he [a]constrained his disciples to enter into the ship, and to go before him unto the other side to Bethsaida, while he himself sent away the multitude.

r Matt. 9.36–38.
s Lk. 9. 11.
t Matt. 14. 15–21. Lk. 9.12–17. *cf.* Lk. 18. 15, 16. *cf.* Heb. 2. 17, 18.
u *cf.* Matt. 10. 8. John 6. 5–14.
v *cf.* 2 Kings 4. 2. *cf.* 1 Cor. 14. 19.
w ch. 8. 6, etc. *cf.* Ex. 14. 13 with Rom. 4. 5.
x *cf.* Jno. 11. 41, 42, with Ps. 16. 1.
y *cf.* 2 Chro. 31. 10 with Mal. 3. 10. *cf.* Ps. 132. 15.
z *cf.* 2 Ki. 4. 42–40. *cf.* Eph. 3. 20.
a Matt. 14. 22–27. John 6. 15–21.

4 (46-52): Experiences by the way.

4. And when he had dismissed them, he [b]went away into the mountain to pray. And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone upon the land. And seeing them [c]distressed in rowing, for the wind was contrary to them, about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, [d]walking on the sea, and would have passed by them; but they, when

b ch. 1. 35. *cf.* Rom. 8. 34.
c *cf.* Jno. 16. 5, 6, 20, 33. *cf.* Matt. 24. 7–9.
d *cf.* Matt. 24. 30. *cf.* Ps. 77. 19. *cf.* Jas. 5. 8.

disciples' hands minister to the need of the multitude out of their own provision multiplying through His blessing on it. Five loaves and two fishes feed, and more than feed, five thousand men. The application is of the easiest, and made by Christians generally; and we have been through it in Matthew already: the fullness of its blessed meaning is as little to be exhausted, as the loaves were at the time here brought before us. It is one of those scenes, exceptional in the evangelic history, to which its four writers all contribute, while in John the Lord Himself develops from it His teaching as to the bread of life.

4. The passage across the sea of Galilee is also connected with the ministry in the wilderness in three of the Gospels, Luke alone omitting it. In each of these the Lord's walking upon the water is recited, and His coming to the disciples toiling in the contrary wind. The walk of Peter on the water to meet the Lord, characteristic as we have seen it to be in Matthew, is omitted in the other accounts; the numerical change being in harmony with this. The general significance of what is here before us cannot be mistaken. The ascent of Jesus into the mount to pray, leaving His disciples alone upon the sea until His coming again, shows us unmistakably the limits of the trial-time of faith, in which is

they saw him walking on the sea, [e] supposed it was an apparition, and cried out: for they all saw him and were troubled. But immediately he spake with them, and saith unto them, [f] Be of good courage: it is I; be not afraid. And he went up unto them into the ship; and the [g] wind ceased. And they were exceedingly [h] amazed among themselves: for they [i] understood not concerning the loaves, but their heart was hardened.

5 (53–56): The end of the way.

5. And when they had passed over, they [j] came to the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore. And when they were come out of the ship, immediately they [k] knew him, and ran throughout that whole country, and began to carry about on their beds those that were sick, wherever they heard he was. And wherever he entered, into villages or into cities or in the country, they laid the sick in the market-places, and besought him that they might [l] touch if it were but the border of his garment; and as many as touched him were healed.

[e] *cf.* Luke 24. 37.
[f] *cf.* Is. 25. 9. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 7.
[g] *cf.* Matt. 8. 26. Ps. 107. 29. *cf.* Ps. 46. 9–11.
[h] *cf.* ch. 4. 41.
[i] *cf.* ch. 8. 17–21. *cf.* Lk. 24. 25
[j] Matt. 14. 34–36.
[k] *cf.* Jno. 4. 45. *cf.* Luke 8. 40.
[l] *cf.* ch. 5. 27, 28.

experienced the opposition of the "course of this world." No doubt, apart from the great and final interference of the Lord on behalf of His people, there are abundance of lesser fulfilments in which He comes in and ends for a time the storm; and some too in which we do not discern for a time the familiar form, and are afraid; until the Voice says, "It is I;" and we wonder we could have failed for a moment to know it; and the storm for the time is over. And yet, how often do we find, when a new trial comes, that we are scarcely more prepared than before to recognize the One who comes afresh with it; and when He makes Himself known it is scarcely less a wonder.

5. But at last the sea is passed, as when He joins us in the end it will be, and then the blessing comes, even for the earth, when it shall "know," like the men of Gennesaret, the One upon whom all blessing depends, and the blight upon the whole frame of things shall pass, with the spiritual sickness it attends and indicates.

SUBD. 2.

The next subdivision runs still, for the most part, side by side with Matthew. Luke omits it all. We have here in the first place the opposition of traditionalism to the ways of God, and therefore to the true service of man; whereas faith directly connects us with God, discerns and owns His way and is confirmed by Him, as with the Syro-phœnician woman. The healing of the deaf man following this is peculiar to Mark; and in this man's condition spiritually seems more fully imaged to us, with no ear to hear, and therefore speech failing. Here the Lord is specially oppressed by the condition, and His "Ephphatha" is uttered with a sigh. Then in another wilderness scene the divine mercy satisfies once more the poor with bread, which as a figure has been plainly interpreted for us; and with this the present subject ends.

1. The growth of traditionalism is not hard to trace. Truth itself from the source of truth, where ministered by man, necessarily accredits the one who brings it. So far this is well, or it would not be necessary; but how often it follows, and at no long interval, that the teacher comes to accredit the truth which first accredited him. We have gained confidence in the man, and begin to accept with less careful examination whatever comes to us from such a source. The interpreter begins to displace the Word that he interprets. For the next generation this is an easier process, and the rule of the rabbi is soon begun. There is soon (formally or informally) a body of doctrine growing up, which although confessedly human and theoretically fallible, is accepted for truth and attaches to itself the masses. Henceforth he who will learn from

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chaps. vii.–viii. 9.)

The Opposition of Traditionalism and the Service of Love.

1 (vii. 1-23): Human commandments and the divine.

1 (1-8): the rule of the rabbi.

1. [1] AND there were gathered together unto him the Pharisees and certain of the scribes that had come from Jerusalem, and had seen some of his disciples [m] eating bread with defiled, that is, unwashed hands: for the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands diligently, eat not, holding the [n] traditions of the elders; and [coming] from the market-place except they wash* themselves, they eat not; and many other things they have received to hold, the washing* of cups and pots and brazen vessels and couches.† And the Pharisees and the scribes ask him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with defiled hands? And he said unto them, Well did [o] Esaias prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines commandments of men. Leaving the commandment of God, ye hold fast the tradition of men.‡

m cf. Matt. 15. 1-9.

n cf. Col. 2. 8. *cf.* Gal. 1. 14. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 18. *cf.* Col. 2. 20-23.

o Is. 29. 13. Ezek. 33. 31. *cf.* Amos 4. 4, 5. *cf.* Amos 5. 21-27. *cf.* Rom. 2. 17-29.

* Literally, "baptize," "baptism."

† Several good authorities omit "couches."

‡ Many add: "washing of vessels and cups, and many other such like things ye do."

God has to break through a steadily increasing barrier to the end he would attain.

Traditional teaching is ever tending downwards. If it has a creed this will be a conservative element, no doubt, but a dead support at best, not a living principle. Being human, it will have gaps through which error will come in, if not error of its own, which will readily unite with further error. Immediate recourse to God is shut off by it, and the profit of His word "for correction, for reproof" is, at least, limited.

In Israel the scribes arose as a reaction from that departure from the law which had been the nation's ruin. They came forward as its defenders and vindicators, and in order to this its investigators and interpreters. Their zeal for its observance urged them to "make a hedge about it" of their own rules, which, while making it ever a heavier yoke, came naturally by degrees to displace what they were intended to enforce. The human came inevitably into conflict with the divine. As additions to it, they broke the law necessarily from the beginning; and the end could not but be still worse than the beginning.

But worse even than their conflicting ordinances was their total mistake as to the nature of the law itself, and of the disease for which it was the appointed remedy. With all their laborious enquiries as to it, they interpreted it superficially, and had no knowledge of its true working. They had not learned the lesson of experience as the apostle declares it, that "that which was ordained to life" he "found to be unto death." They tried therefore to remedy the failure under it by additional ordinances, instead of turning to that Saviour of whom the prophets with one voice testified. Their remedy was law, not grace; letter and not spirit. They would heal man's deep-seated disease from the outside, and if they suppressed the external signs, only aggravated to a fatal issue the internal disorder.

[1] Mark emphasizes beyond Matthew the religious scrupulosity which dealt with the outside, the ceremonial washings (or "baptisms") of hands, cups,

2 (9-13): the opposition.

2 And he said unto them, Well do ye [p] set aside the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For [q] Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother, and he that speaketh evil of father or mother, let him die the death. But *ye* say, If a man say to his father or his mother, [It is] Corban, that is, a gift, that with which thou mightest have been profited by me, ye no longer [r] suffer him to do aught for his father or his mother: making void the word of God by your tradition which ye have delivered: and many such like things ye do.

3 (14-23): the heart that which defiles.

3 And having called the multitude to him again, he saith unto them, Hearken unto me, all of you, and understand: there is [s] nothing from without the man that entering into him can defile him; but the things which [t] come out from him are the things that defile the man. If any one hath ears to hear, let him hear.* And when he was entered into the house from the multitude, his disciples asked him as to the parable. And he saith unto them, Are ye also so unintelligent? Perceive ye not that any thing that is without, entering into a man, cannot defile him: because it goeth not into his [u] heart, but into his belly, and goeth out into the draught,† purging all foods? And he said, That which goeth forth out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, [v] out of the heart of men, go forth evil thoughts, fornications, murders, thefts, adulteries, covetousness, wickednesses, deceit, licentiousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, haughtiness, folly: all these evil things go forth from within, and they defile the man.

2 (vii.24-30): The discernment of faith.

2. And from thence he arose and went away into the [w] borders of Tyre and Sidon; and having entered into a house, he would have no man know it; and he [x] could not be hid. But immediately a woman whose little

p *cf.* Matt. 23. 14-33.

q Ex. 20. 12. Ex. 21. 17. Lev. 20. 9. *cf.* Deut. 21. 18-21.

r *cf.* 1 Tim. 5. 8. *ctr.* Eph. 4. 28.

s Matt. 15. 10-20. *cf.* Rom. 14. 14. *cf.* 1 Tim. 4. 4.

t *cf.* Jer. 17. 9. *cf.* Rom. 3. 10-18.

u *cf.* Prov. 4. 23.

v *cf.* Matt. 12. 34, 35. *cf.* Gen. 6. 5. *cf.* Jas. 3. 10-12. *ctr.* Ps. 45. 1.

w Matt. 15. 21-28.

x *cf.* ch. 2. 1, 2. *cf.* Jno. 4. 4-7.

* Many omit this verse.
† Or "place of refuse."

vessels, couches; tedious in proportion to its vain unprofitableness. God, by Isaiah, had characterized it long since as mere externalism without heart, human commandments claiming divine authority: so essentially hollow that the Lord denounces it as hypocrisy.

2 In fact, what God had commanded was set aside by it; and the breach of the "first commandment with promise" was only an example of many like things which they did.

3 With such it was even vain to argue. The Lord turns, therefore, to the multude to show them the simple underlying principle which justified to the conscience what He said. Nature had provided for the cleansing of impurities as to the body. Moral, spiritual defilement is, alas, from what comes out of the man, from the heart, and is native there. But how then shall the heart be cleansed?

2. For this they are not ready. He turns from them towards the Gentiles as hiding Himself from their unbelief, to find in one herself a Gentile, a conscious need of Him from which He could not hide Himself, and a discernment of faith which Israel's doctors lacked. This Syro-phœnician, content to take her true

daughter had an unclean spirit, having heard of him, came and fell at his feet. Now the woman was a Gentile,* a Syro-phenician by race; and she besought him that he would cast out the demon out of her daughter. And he said unto her, Let the [y]children first be filled: for it is not right to take the children's loaf and [z]cast it to the dogs.† But she answered and saith unto him, Yea, Lord; even the dogs† under the table eat of the children's [a]crumbs. And he said unto her, For [b]this saying go thy way: the demon is gone out of thy daughter. And she went away to her house, and found the child [c]laid upon the couch, and the demon gone out.

3(vii.31-37): Man's state fully realized.

3. And again, having left the borders of Tyre, he [d]came through Sidon to the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the borders of Decapolis. And they bring unto him one that was [e]deaf and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to lay his hand upon him. And he took him away [f]apart from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he [g]spat and touched his tongue; and, looking up to heaven, he [h]sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And immediately his [i]ears were opened, and the [j]bond of his tongue was loosed, and he spake aright. And he [k]charged them that they should speak of it to none; but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it. And they were [l]astonished above measure, saying, He hath done [m]all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak.

4(viii.1-9): Wilderness mercy.

4. In those days the multitude being again great, and having [n]nothing to eat, he called to him his disciples

* Literally, "Greek."
† Greek, "little dogs."

y *cf.* Jno. 4. 22. *cf.* Matt. 10. 5, 6. *ctr.* Matt. 8. 11, 12.
z *cf.* Acts 13. 46, 47. *cf.* Col. 1. 27.
a *cf.* ch. 6. 43. *cf.* Rom. 11. 15.
b *cf.* Luke 18. 14.
c *cf.* ch. 5. 15.
d Matt. 15. 29.
e *cf.* Is. 29. 18. *cf.* Is. 35. 5.
f *cf.* ch. 5. 37.
g ch. 8. 23. Jno. 9. 6.
h Jno. 11. 33, 35, 38. *cf.* Lk. 19. 41.
i *cf.* Job 33. 16. *cf.* Job 36. 10, 15, 16.
j *cf.* Is. 32. 4. *cf.* Is. 35. 5, 6. *cf.* Matt. 9. 32, 33.
k ch. 1. 43, 44. ch. 5. 43.
l Luke 5. 26.
m *cf.* Lk. 19. 37, 38. *cf.* Matt. 3. 17. *cf.* Jno. 17. 4.
n Matt. 15. 32-38. *cf.* ch. 6. 34-44.

place as a dog before Him, could find her title in His grace to divine bounty, discerning what was impenetrable to the men of law. This faith on His part He recognizes and rejoices in. The power of Satan is quelled, and the soul satisfied.

3. But Israel had no ear to hear the Voice that spake to them: and this is indeed man's condition naturally, a condition symbolized in this deaf man brought to Christ, and who has a corresponding impediment in his speech: for the speech can only be right where the ear is open. The Lord is oppressed in spirit with this condition. He puts the finger which had touched the leper into his ears: for does not spiritual leprosy underlie such deafness spiritually? and in the cleansing of the leper the ear is the first part anointed. In this type the meaning is quite clear. The soul under the power of sin is deaf to the voice of God—has lost even the power of hearing aright. That which cleanses the leper alone gives the ear to hear.

The Lord touches the tongue also; and then, lifting up His eyes to heaven, sighs and says, Ephphatha! "be opened." Immediately, his ears are opened, and the bond of his tongue loosed. He is here in Decapolis, a part of the land mainly Gentile and heathen, but the fame of this miracle goes far and wide.

4. The crowds follow Him; and the miracle of the loaves is repeated on their behalf. Here again we are in the track of Matthew's Gospel, and the difference

and saith unto them, I have compassion upon the multitude, because they have continued with me now three days, and have nothing to eat; and if I send them away home fasting, they will [o]faint by the way: and some of them are come from far. And his disciples answered him, [p]Whence can one satisfy these with bread here in a desert place? And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground; and taking the seven loaves, he gave thanks and brake, and gave them to his disciples, that they might set them before them; and they did set them before the multitude. And they had a [q]few little fishes; and having blessed them, he commanded these also to be set [before them]. And they ate and were [r]satisfied. And they took up of fragments that remained seven baskets. And there were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

o Matt. 9.36. *cf.* Ps. 107. 4, 5. *cf.* Is.40.30.
p *cf.* Ps. 78. 19, 20. *cf.* 2 Ki. 7. 1, 2.
q *cf.* Ju. 7. 3, 4. *cf.* 2 Chro. 14. 11.
r *ctr.* Lev. 26. 26. *cf.* Ps. 132. 15.

SUBDIVISION 3. (Chaps. viii. 10–ix. 8.)

The Revelation of the Glory of Christ here and hereafter.

1 (viii. 10-21): Leaven.

1. AND immediately he [s]entered into the ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha. And the Pharisees came out and began to dispute with him, seeking of him a [t]sign from heaven, tempting him. And groaning in his spirit, he saith, Why doth this generation seek a sign? Verily, I say unto you, There shall [u]no sign be given to this generation. And he left them, and going aboard again, departed to the other side.

s Matt. 15. 39.
t Matt. 12. 38-40. Matt. 16. 1-4. *cf.* Jno. 6. 30, 31.
u *cf.* Matt. 21. 23-27. *cf.* Lk. 16. 30, 31.

between the two accounts is very slight. The healing of the multitudes, however, which Matthew records, is omitted here, and their glorifying the God of *Israel*. Instead of *five* loaves among *five* thousand men, as on the former occasion, with *twelve* baskets of fragments taken up (see p. 157, *notes*), we have now *seven* loaves with *seven* baskets, and *four* thousand men: the numbers of perfection and of the world at large. They remind us of the perfect sufficiency of divine blessing for all human need, and of all men without restriction being in God's desire participants in it. This fittingly closes what we have had before us.

SUBD. 3.

And now we come to the point at which the Lord, having in opposition to the general unbelief elicited from His disciples their faith in Him as the Christ, forbids them any more to speak of Him as that. The Son of man was to suffer and die and be raised from the dead, and come again in glory. The glory now hidden from the world and manifest to faith alone, will at last be revealed from heaven. But till then His disciples must accept the cross after the pattern of their Master. Here the shrinking of nature is at once evident; and in view of it the transfiguration of the Lord attests that they have followed no cunningly devised fables, confirming the word of prophecy by the display of that coming glory. This is Peter's own interpretation of what took place upon the "holy mount" (2 Peter i. 16–19).

1. We start here with the demand of the Pharisees of a sign from heaven, which shows only their own total and wilful blindness to His true glory. The "sign of the Son of man in heaven" will be seen at last; but too late then for His rejectors. The seeking for new proofs amid the profusion that had been

And they had forgotten to take bread; neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf. And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the [v]leaven of the Pharisees and of the leaven of Herod. And they reasoned with one another, [It is] because we have no bread. And Jesus, knowing it, saith unto them, Why reason ye because ye have no bread? Do ye not [w]yet perceive nor understand? Have ye your heart hardened? Having [x]eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do not ye remember? When I brake the [y]five loaves to the five thousand, how many hand-baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. And when [I brake] the [z]seven to the four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they say unto him, Seven. And he said unto them, Do ye not yet understand?

v Matt. 16. 5–12. *cf.* Lk. 12. 1. *cf.* 1 Cor. 5. 6. *cf.* Gal. 5. 9.

w *cf.* Lk. 24. 25.

x *cf.* Ps. 115. 5, 6, 8.

y ch. 6. 35–44.

z vers. 1–9.

2 (viii. 22–26): Gradual discernment.

2. And they come to Bethsaida; and they bring unto him a [a]blind man, and beseech him that he would touch him. And he took hold of the blind man's hand and brought him [b]outside the village; and having spat upon his eyes, he put his hands upon him, and asked him if he saw anything. And he looked up and said, I behold men: for I see [them] as [c]trees, walking. Then again he laid his hands upon his eyes, and he saw distinctly, and was restored, and saw all things [d]clearly. And he sent him to his house, saying, [e]Neither go into the village, [nor tell it to any in the village].*

a Is. 42. 16, 18.

b *cf.* ch. 7. 33. *cf.* Jno. 9. 35–38.

c *cf.* Acts 18. 24–28. *cf.* Phil. 1. 10.

d *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 9. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 27. *ctr.* Rev. 3. 18.

e ch. 7. 36. ver. 30.

3 (viii. 27–30): Faith manifests itself in the recognition of Christ.

3. And Jesus [f]went out and his disciples into the villages of Cæsarea Philippi. And in the way he asked his dis-

f Matt. 16. 13–20. Lk. 9. 18–21.

* Many omit this last clause.

given was but the seeking of justification for their unbelief; and to such no sign could be effectual: none, therefore, would be given. He leaves them and departs to the other side of the sea.

In fact their self-righteousness had no need of Him and was but a ferment of opposition in their hearts. This is what He presently calls it—"leaven," "ferment": the pride and will of man aroused in rebellion against God; and this characterized them. Elsewhere He stamps it as "hypocrisy": for their minds were made up, and their arguments were but insincere,—the dictates of will, not reason. Alas, in disciples also such leaven might be found: self-righteousness as in the Pharisees, worldliness as in the Herodians. Of this He warns them now, though at first they think but of the bread they have forgotten; and they have forgotten practically the bread that He had blessed!

2. Following this, the blind man at Bethsaida illustrates, as it would seem, the gradual breaking in of light with those who are in His hands for the cure of nature's blindness,—hands that do not cease their work until the cure is complete. The hindrances to it have just been put before us,—self-occupation, the world, the half-sincerity and lack of earnestness in our discipleship, and such like things. No wonder if the Lord must have us alone with Himself for cure, outside of Bethsaida, the "place of nets," which the world truly is. Then comes the touch of His hands; and if the sight produced be indistinct, we must still not deny that it is truly sight. Nor will He leave till it be perfected.

3. We have had the hindrances of faith, and its gradual development amid such hindrances; we now have that in which, where real, it ever manifests it-

ciples, saying unto them, [g]Who do men say that I am? And they told him, saying, John the Baptist; and others, Elias; but others, One of the prophets. And he asked them, But ye, who say ye that I am? Peter answering saith unto him, [h]Thou art the Christ. And he [i]charged them strictly that they should tell no man of him.

4 (viii. 31–38): The path and the failure as to it.

4. And he began to [j]teach them that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he spake that openly; and Peter took him and began to [k]rebuke him. But he turned, and looking on his disciples, rebuked Peter, and saith, [l]Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou hast not a mind toward the things of God, but toward the things of men. And calling the multitude to him with his disciples, he said unto them, [m]If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and

g *cf.* Matt. 22. 42–46.
h *cf.* 1 Cor. 12. 3. *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 2, 3. *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 1. *cf.* Jno. 1. 49.
i *cf.* Matt. 11. 27. *cf.* ch. 9. 9.
j Matt. 16. 21–23. Lk. 9. 22. *cf.* ch. 9. 31.
k *ctr.* ver. 29. *cf.* John 21. 18, 19 with 2 Pet. 2. 14. 15.
l *cf.* Matt. 4. 10 with Gal. 1. 8, 9.
m Matt. 16. 24–28. Lk. 9. 23–27. Lk. 14. 27. *cf.* Phil. 3. 7–10.

self. It may see men but as trees walking; but it sees Christ and does not confound Him with other men. Those who said He was John the Baptist or Elias did not mean Him any dishonor, but they had not eyes to distinguish the glory of the Christ of God. The Lord tells them that they are not to make Him known as such: for it was now plain that Israel had no welcome for Him; and the Cross was now to be the only expectation that His followers were to entertain. Mark here omits some pregnant words in the confession of Peter, and the announcement both as to the Church and Kingdom with which the Lord answers it. Mark's abridgment of Matthew, if it were that, still follows the distinct purpose of his Gospel, omitting what is dispensational, and simply showing us what distinguishes true faith from all the wisdom or sentiment of man, and carries us on at once to see what man's unbelief involves as to the path of the true believer.

4. He begins therefore now to teach them that the Son of man—speaking of Himself under that title which showed His connection with men at large and His own stooping to all implied in true humanity,—"that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priest and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."

Immediately the very one in whom faith has been foremost becomes foremost in opposition to it. "Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him"! But He turning round, and with His eyes upon them all, on His part rebukes this opposition as of Satan. Satan had before proposed to Him a way to the Kingdom without the Cross; and here amongst His own is the same voice now, exhorting Him to spare Himself. But these were not the purposes of God, but the weak human thoughts which could so easily oppose themselves to God. Not as seeking His own after such a sort could He be man's Saviour; and the path of His disciples also must be after the pattern of His own. He calls the multitude to Him with His disciples, that the conditions of discipleship to Him may be perfectly understood. He that will come after Him must follow on the same road: he must deny himself and take up his cross also, and follow Him.

He contrasts here the two ways, of one of which every one must make choice. To seek one's own is to lose all,—to lose even oneself,* as it is put in Luke (ix. 25), and for ever. To lose one's life for Christ's sake and the gospel's is eternal

* The ambiguity of ψυχή, "soul" or "life," makes a difficulty in translating, not really in understanding, what is here said. Man being a living soul, his soul is often but a synonym for "himself," and so here. There is a present loss of oneself which is only gain, the laying down one's life for Christ's sake; while final loss is irretrievable ruin.

follow me. For [n] whosoever willeth to save his life* shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life* for my sake and the gospel's, shall save it. For [o] what doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?* or what should a man give in exchange for his soul?* For whosoever shall be [p] ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man also be ashamed, when he [q] cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.

5 (ix. 1-8): The end of the way.

5. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that there are some of those standing here who shall not taste of death until they [r] see the kingdom of God come in power.

And after [s] six days Jesus taketh with [him] Peter and James and John, and bringeth them up into a high mountain [t] apart by themselves. And he was [u] transfigured before them; and his garments became shining, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth could whiten them. And there appeared unto them [v] Elias, with [w] Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answering saith unto Jesus, Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make [z] three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. For he [y] knew not what he should answer, for they were filled with fear. And there came a [z] cloud, overshadowing them; and there came a voice out of the cloud, [a] This is my beloved Son: hear him. And suddenly looking round, they saw [b] no man any longer, but Jesus only with themselves.

* ψυχή, "soul" or "life."

14; *cf.* 2 Ki. 2. 11 with 1 Thess. 4. 17. *x ctr.* ch. 8. 28, 29; *cf.* Phil. 2. 9; *cf.* Heb. 3. 5, 6. *y cf.* Matt. 20. 20-23; *ctr.* Acts 4. 11, 12. *z cf.* Ex. 40. 34; *cf.* Acts 1. 9; *cf.* Rev. 1. 7. *a* ch. 1. 11. *cf.* Jno. 12. 28. *b cf.* Jno. 6. 68; *cf.* Jno. 3. 30; *cf.* Col. 3. 11.

n Lk. 17. 33. Jno. 12. 24-26. *cf.* Rom. 6. 1-7. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 5-11 with Acts 20. 24.
o Ps. 49. 6-8. *cf.* Jas. 5. 1-3.
p Matt. 10. 32, 33. *cf.* Jno. 12. 42, 43. *cf.* Jno. 5. 44. *ctr.* Rom. 1. 16. *cf.* 2 Tim. 1. 7-9. *cf.* Phil. 1. 20, 21.
q Matt. 25. 31, etc. *cf.* Col. 3. 4.
r cf. 2 Pet. 1. 16-18. vers. 2-4.
s Matt. 17. 1-8. Lk. 9. 28-36.
t cf. ch. 7. 33. *cf.* Rev. 1. 9, etc.
u cf. Phil. 2. 9, 10. *cf.* Heb. 2. 9. *cf.* Rev. 1. 13-16.
v cf. Rom. 3. 21, 31. *cf.* Deut. 34. 5, 6 with 1 Thess. 4. 6. *cf.* Rev. 15. 3.
w cf. Mal. 4. 5. *cf.* 1 Ki. 19.

gain. This in the spirit of it applies to all; to-day, as much as at any former time: and a solemn word it is. The confession of Christ still *costs:* that which does not is scarcely to be called confession. "For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man also be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of the Father, with the holy angels."

5. The last words lead on to the transfiguration scene in which that coming of the Son of man is foreshown. We have already considered it in the notes on Matthew, with whose account Mark's is almost identical, except that it is shorter. These repetitions have, doubtless, even as such, their significance; and they differ as being connected with different lines of truth. But we need much more and deeper study to understand such things as these.

SUBD. 4.

We have now the way put before us in its moral features, along with that which experience does not permit us to make marvel of, the contrast of our own ways naturally. Two things are specially insisted on here, the second of which is involved in the first: faith,—which, putting God in His place, puts me in mine; and lowliness, which is just the taking this creature-place before God. As a foundation principle of the path itself we find, what the disciples as yet could not enter into, and in the Gospels could not be much more than hinted

SUBDIVISION 4. (Chap. ix. 9–50.)

God's way for us and our way.

1 (9–13): Foundation principles.

1. AND when they came down from the mountain, he [c]charged them that they should tell no one what they had seen until the Son of man should be [d]risen from among the dead. And they kept that saying, questioning among themselves what the rising from the dead was. And they asked him, saying, Why do the scribes say that [e]Elias must first come? But he said unto them, Elias indeed, coming first, restoreth all things; and how is it written of the Son of man that he should suffer many things, and be set at nought? [f]But I say unto you that Elias is even come, and they have done to him whatsoever they would, as it is written of him.

c Matt. 17. 9-13. *cf.* ch. 8.30.
d ch. 8. 31. Matt.20.19. Matt.26.61. Matt.27.63. *cf.* Acts 2. 32.
e Mal.4.5,6.
f Matt.11.14. Luke 1.17.

2 (14–29): The enemy and the deliverance of faith.

2. And when they came to the disciples, they saw a [g]great multitude round them, and scribes questioning with them. And immediately all the multitude seeing him were [h]astonished, and running to him, saluted him. And he asked them, What question ye with them? And one of the multitude answered him, Teacher, I have brought to thee my son, who hath a [i]dumb spirit; and wheresoever it seizeth him it throweth him down; and he foameth, and gnasheth his teeth, and is withering away; and I spake to thy disciples that they might cast it out; and they [j]could not. But

g Matt. 17. 14-18. Lk. 9. 37-42. *cf.* Rev. 19. 11-21.
h *cf.* ch. 10. 32. *cf.* Ex. 34. 29, 30.
i *cf.* Matt. 12. 22.
j *cf.* ch. 6. 7. *cf.* vers. 28, 29.

at,—resurrection; which is twice declared here as to the Lord Himself, but the application of it to disciples is left for us to make. This part closes with a most solemn affirmation of a day of recompense,—the most emphatic, perhaps, that we find in Scripture.

1. As they come down with Him from the mount of transfiguration, the Lord charges the three who have been admitted to this wondrous sight to say nothing of it to any one until the Son of man is risen from among the dead. At this, though He has already plainly spoken of it, they are perplexed. A rising *from among* the dead is a thing strange to them, though resurrection itself was an accepted truth. This is now the Christian form of it, the Lord Himself being the first-fruits and pattern. No such application is as yet made of it however: only the Son of man is to arise alone on the third day. It is a foundation of our faith that He has done this.

But the disciples have a question they would fain put. How is it that the scribes say that Elias must come before Messiah's day? They know that here is Messiah. The Lord answers that indeed Elias must come first and restore all things. And how is it written, on the other hand, that the Son of man must suffer many things and be set at nought? That did not look like coming after all things were restored. And yet in fact there had been a coming of Elias,—one who had come in such a spirit and power. But that light had gone out: they had done to him according to their will; and so the Son of man would suffer also.

Thus a world contrary, and power in the meantime with it, a path leading down to death, with resurrection as the answer of God beyond: these are the features of the way traveled by the Lord, and upon which His disciples follow Him.

2. The power of Satan has also to be reckoned with; but the enemy here is one already vanquished, and faith only is needed for full deliverance. Faith,

he answered and saith unto them, O [k]unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him to me. And they brought him to him; and [l]when he saw him, immediately the spirit convulsed him; and he fell upon the ground and rolled, foaming. And he asked his father, How long time is it since this came unto him? And he said, From [m]childhood: and oft-times it hath cast him into the fire and into the water to destroy him; but [n]if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us and help us. But Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe:* [o]all things are possible to him that believeth. Immediately the father of the young child cried out† and said, I believe: [p]help thou mine unbelief. Now when Jesus saw that the multitude came running together, he rebuked the unclean spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, *I* [q]command thee come out of him, and enter [r]no more into him. And he cried out and convulsed him greatly, and came out. And he became as if dead; so that the mass said, He is dead. But Jesus [s]took him by the hand and raised him, and he stood up. And when he had come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, [t]Why could not *we* cast him out? And he said unto them, [u]This kind cannot go out except by prayer [and fasting].‡

3 (30-32): The Lord's death and resurrection again pressed.

3. And going forth from thence, they went through Galilee; and he would not have any [v]know it: for he taught his disciples and said unto them, The Son of man is [w]delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him; and when he is killed, after three days, he shall rise again. But they [x]understood not the saying, and were [y]afraid to ask him.

k *cf.* Jno. 4. 48. *cf.* Jno. 14. 12.
l *cf.* Rev.12. 12.
m *cf.* Jno. 9. 1 with Ps. 51. 5.
n *cf.* ch.1.40.
o *cf.* ch. 11. 22, 23. *cf.* Matt. 9. 28, 29.
p *cf.* Eph. 2. 8 with Jno. 6. 44.
q *cf.* ch. 1. 25–27.
r *ctr.* Matt. 12. 43–45. *cf.* Jer. 31. 31–34.
s ch. 5. 41, 42.
t *cf.* Josh. 7. 6–12.
u *cf.* 1 Ki. 18. 42–45. *cf.* Acts13.2.
v ch. 7. 24.
w ch. 8. 31.
x *cf.* Jno.16. 12, 13 with Jno. 2. 22.
y *cf.* ch. 10. 32. *ctr.* Phil. 3. 10.

* Many omit "believe."
† Many add, "with tears."
‡ Some omit.

alas, may be lacking so that power which has been given may not be available. The child brought to the Lord has been already in the hands of those who were expressly authorized to cast out demons; yet they have only shown their incompetency in this case to do anything. It is over these He groans as an unbelieving generation, though still there is a resource in Himself, however much disciples fail. Here, as He says to the father of the child, "all things are possible to him that believeth." Mark emphasizes the malignity of the demon and the long time of possession. After he is gone out, the child seems for the moment dead; but Jesus takes him by the hand and he rises up. To His disciples He says that so virulent a case could yield only to prayer and fasting. But how great is the encouragement in such an enemy so certainly to be vanquished. The demand for faith to be in energy is no abatement of the blessing.

3. Next we have once more the pressing of death and resurrection, possibly in a wider circle than before. There is no comment upon it, except that "they understood not and were afraid to ask Him." How many things we are disposed to shirk after this manner; and in doing so lose, as far as we can, our own best blessings. By and by, this death and resurrection will be the staple of the gospel that they everywhere proclaim; and beyond this still, new glories

4 (33-41): The spirit of meekness.

4. And they [z]came to Capernaum; and having come into the house, he asked them, What were ye reasoning about in the way? But they were silent: for they had been disputing with one another by the way, who should be the [a]greater. And he sat down and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any one will be the [b]first, he shall be last of all and servant of all. And he took a little [c]child and placed it in the midst of them, and having taken it in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall [d]receive one of such little children in my name receiveth me, and whosoever receiveth me receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

John said unto him, Teacher, we saw one [e]casting out demons in thy name, [who followeth not us;]* and we forbade him, because he followeth not [f]us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no one who will do a miracle in my name and be able quickly to speak evil of me: for whosoever is not [g]against us is on our side. For whosoever shall give you a [h]cup of water to drink in my name, because ye are Christ's, verily I say unto you that he shall not lose his reward.

* Many omit.

z Matt. 18. 1-5. Lk. 9. 46-48. Lk. 22. 24-27.
a *cfr.* Phil. 2. 3.
b *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 9.
c *cf.* ch. 10. 13-16. *cf.* 1 Cor. 3. 18, 19. *cf.* Ps. 131.
d Matt. 10. 40. Jno. 13. 20.
e Lk. 9. 49, 50. *cf.* Nu. 11. 26-29. *cf.* Phil. 1. 12-18.
f *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 10-13.
g *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 1-6. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 18, 19. *cf.* Matt. 12. 30.
h Matt. 10. 42. Matt. 25. 40. *cf.* Heb. 6. 10. *cf.* 2 Tim. 1. 16-18.

will develop in it: Christians will learn and rejoice to realize that they are dead and risen with Christ.

This repetition of the announcement of Christ's death may, as I have said, point to that which could not yet be uttered. As a principle of the walk, for us it is of primary importance. To "walk in Christ" involves of necessity the being risen with Him; and this is the only Christian standard.

4. Grace has put us in such a place, and only grace could do it. There is no possible room for the thought of merit in our gaining that which man in innocence could never have pretended to, and which makes our whole life henceforth but a thank-offering for it. Faith is that by which we regain what we had lost in the fall, the place of creature nothingness before God, with the sense also of our guilt in having lost it. Thus there should be for us no claim of greatness any more, while the glorious example before our eyes of One who became for us a servant in His love, self-humbled, poor, emptied of the glory proper to Him, should rid us of all desire of self-exaltation.

Yet, alas, the next thing that we read of after His announcement of the death to which He is going, is an unseemly strife among the disciples as to who should be the greater. The Lord meets it promptly. The desire to be first would only qualify one to be last, and servant of all. Then He takes a little child, young enough to be taken up in the arms, and tells them that He could link His Name with one like that. Nay, here was the type of what He could identify Himself with. He who received one such little child in His Name received Himself, and thus the Father also. Before God indeed, what is the man beyond the babe? Only the happy thing is to recognize it.

John thereupon tells Him, as inviting His judgment on it, how they had found one casting out demons in His Name and had forbidden him as not following them. Here, too, the spirit of meekness had been lacking. They who had but so lately failed (spite of having authority) to cast out a demon, should have known that one who could do so must have some title. Christ's name was not a thing that one could conjure with. There must have been some reverence for that name which could use it as a word of power against Satan. Such an one could not turn quickly round from this to speak evil of Christ. But among

5 (42-50): God's recompense for offences.

5. And whosoever shall [i]cause one of these little ones that believe in me to stumble, it were better for him if a great mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. And if thy [j]hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off; it is better for thee to [k]enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go away into hell,* into the fire [l]unquenchable; [where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.]† And if thy [m]foot cause thee to stumble, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter life lame, than having two feet to be cast into hell, [into the fire unquenchable; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.]† And if thine eye cause thee to stumble, cast it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into the hell of fire, where their [n]worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with [o]fire, [and every [p]sacrifice shall be salted with salt.]† Salt is good; but if the salt have [q]lost its saltness, with what will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have [r]peace with one another.

* Literally, "gehenna."
† Many omit.

i Matt. 18.6. Lk. 17. 1,2. *cf.* Rom. 14. 15-23. *cf.* 1 Cor. 8. 7-13.
j Matt. 5.29, 30. Matt. 18. 8, 9. *cf.* Gal. 2.20 with Col. 3. 5-11.
k Matt. 19. 17. *cf.* 1 Pet. 4. 18.
l *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 8, 9. *cf.* Rev. 19. 20. *cf.* Rev. 20. 10, 14, 15.
m *cf.* Rom. 6. 13, 14.
n *cf.* Lk. 16. 22-26. *cf.* Jer. 8.20.
o *cf.* Matt. 3. 11. *cf.* Lk. 12. 49.
p Lev. 2. 13. Nu. 18. 19. Ezek. 43.24.
q Matt. 5.13. *cf.* Rev. 3.1. *cf.* 2 Tim. 3. 5.
r *cf.* Col. 4. 6. *cf.* Gal. 5. 15.

men there were only opposing ranks: he who was not against was for Him. And he who thought so of Christ's name as to give but a cup of water to one who belonged to Him, should not in any wise lose his reward.

5. The Lord passes from this to speak of recompence upon the other side in the same manner but with more emphasis than in Matthew. Every one must be salted with fire: for "our God is a consuming fire." This jealous holiness by its judgement of the evil would only preserve the good: for, when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. On the other hand, for the wicked the salting with fire applies to the awful judgment of Gehenna, "where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." Here the holiness of God as pure wrath upon sin, eternal as His unchanging nature, unites with the undying worm of a remorseful conscience to torment the sinner. Ah, better surely to give up what may seem necessary as eye or hand or foot, live here in whatever maimed, imperfect way, and enter into life, than, having here the fulness of all good, pass on to the eternal fire!

But "every sacrifice shall be salted with salt:" that which is to be presented to God must answer to His nature; there must be "the salt of the covenant of thy God," as the law puts it, or what must be in all relationship with Him. Salt is the energy of devotedness to God which keeps out corruption: "salt," therefore, "is good," and if it lose its power, what shall replace it? Salt, therefore, we must have in ourselves. It will diffuse its savor round, of course: if it has any, it will surely do so. But this is ministering, not requiring. We must be jealous over ourselves—careful, of course, to maintain this character in all our intercourse with others; but in peace—so easily broken by a legal and exacting spirit: "have peace one with another."

SUBD. 5.

We have now, as again in Matthew, nature in its relation to God, a matter of great moment in the path of service: the institution of marriage, the relationship to Him of children, the state of man in his best naturally, sin having

SUBDIVISION 5. (Chap. x. 1-45.)

Results: Nature in its relation to God.

1 (1-12): The Creator's ordinance governing still: man and wife one flesh.

1. AND rising up from thence he cometh into the [s]borders of Judea, and beyond Jordan; and multitudes come together again unto him, and as he was wont he taught them again. And the [t]Pharisees coming to him asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife? tempting him. But he answered and said unto them, What did [u]Moses command you? And they said, Moses [v]allowed to write a bill of divorce and to put [her] away. But Jesus said to them, In view of your [w]hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment, but from the [x]beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause a man shall [y]leave his father and his mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and the two shall be one flesh: so that they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath united together, let not man put asunder. And in the house again the disciples asked him concerning this. And he saith unto them, [z]Whosoever shall put away his wife and shall marry another committeth adultery against her; and if [a woman] * put away her husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery.

2 (13-16): Children in their relation to the Kingdom.

2. And they [a]brought unto him young children that he might touch them; and his disciples rebuked [those that brought] † them. But when Jesus saw it he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a [b]little child, he shall in no wise enter therein. And he took

s Matt. 19. 1, 2. *cf.* Jno. 10. 40.

t Matt. 19. 3-9.

u *cf.* Lk. 10. 26. *cf.* Matt. 5. 17-20.

v Deut. 24. 1-4. Matt 5. 31.

w *cf.* Rom. 8. 3, 4. *cf.* Heb. 7. 18, 19.

x Gen. 1. 27.

y Gen. 2. 21-25. *cf.* Mal. 2. 14, 15. 1 Cor. 6. 16. *cf.* Eph. 5. 31, 32.

z Lk. 16. 18. *cf.* 1 Cor. 7. 10.

a Matt. 19. 13-15. Lk. 18. 15-17. *cf.* Matt. 21. 15, 16.

b ch. 9. 36.

* Greek, "she."
† Some omit.

thrown its dark shadow over all; finally, we see nature thus deformed working in the servant of God himself and tending to destroy the whole character of service; but then the victory of God over it, and the perfect Servant setting the pattern for His people and moulding them after His own likeness.

As we have gone through this in Matthew, we shall add but little to it here; seeking mainly to note any points of difference, with a conviction at the same time of how slight and superficial our knowledge of these differences is, and how the word of God must suffer from our scanty knowledge of it.

1. In the question as to marriage we are taught by Christ to respect absolutely the Creator's ordinance at the beginning. According to that, man and wife are one flesh, and this is founded on the creative work itself which made them male and female, one man and one woman. God has joined them together: man must not put them asunder. Mark does not even notice the exceptional allowance of divorce, when the marriage tie has in fact been broken through.

2. As to the children, Mark notices the Lord's displeasure at the disciples' conduct, and gives here substantially what in Matthew is found elsewhere, that only those who received the Kingdom of God as a little child could enter therein (Matt. xviii. 3). Mark also shows a fuller answer on the Lord's part to a

them up in his arms, laid his hands on them and blessed them much.

3 (17-22): The heart manifested.

3. And as he went forth into the way, there [c]came one running, and kneeled down to him and asked him, Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? But Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? [d]none is good but one—God. Thou knowest the [e]commandments, Do not commit adultery; do not kill; do not steal; do not bear false witness; defraud not; honor thy father and mother. But he said unto him, Teacher, [f]all these things I have kept from my youth. Now Jesus, looking upon him, [g]loved him, and said unto him, [h]One thing thou lackest: go thy way, [i]sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have [j]treasure in heaven; and come,* follow me. But he was [k]sad at that word, and went away grieved: for he had large possessions.

4 (23-27): Natural impotence.

4. And Jesus looking around, saith to his disciples, How [l]hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answered again and saith unto them, Children, how hard it is [for those that [m]trust in riches]† to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were ex-

* Some add "taking up the cross."
† Some omit.

c Matt. 19. 16-26. Lk. 18. 18-27.
d *cf.* Ps. 16. 2 with Phil. 2. 7.
e *cf.* Lk. 10. 26-28 with Rom. 3. 20.
f *cf.* Phil. 3. 5-11.
g *cf.* Lk. 19. 41, 42. *cf.* Hos. 11. 8.
h *cf.* Lk. 10. 42.
i Matt. 6. 19, 20. Lk. 12. 32-34. *cf.* Acts 2. 45.
j *cf.* Heb. 10. 34. *cf.* Phil. 3. 18-21.
k *ctr.* Acts 20. 24 with Phil. 3. 10-14.
l *cf.* Lk. 6. 24. *cf.* Jas. 5. 1-6. *cf.* 1 Tim. 6. 7-11.
m Job 31. 24. *cf.* Ps. 52. 7. *cf.* 1 Tim. 6. 17-19.

slighter request. He is asked to "touch" them; He takes them up in His arms, puts His hands on them, and blesses them.

3. In the ruler's case which follows, we find the heart manifested of one who is, as Paul says of himself when unconverted, "touching the righteousness which is of the law, blameless." There is really that on account of which it is said, (and in direct connection with his "Teacher, all these things have I kept from my youth,") that "Jesus looking upon him, loved him." There was that in him which was lovable. What he says of himself, he says with an honest conscience and conviction of its truth. Nor is he, as his question shows, merely engrossed with the present and without thought of God. He desires and seeks eternal life; and, attracted by what he hears or sees in Jesus, he comes to Him to learn the way to find this.

Mark emphasizes his running and kneeling to the Lord, his "*Good* Teacher," which from that mere human standpoint the Lord cannot accept. Goodness is in God alone: would that he had sought it only there! Nature is fully judged in the sweep of that assertion; and presently in his aching heart, as he turns, alas, from the One in whom his hope had been, he has to realize at least the bond that (one would fain hope, only for the present) holds him from the blessing that he seeks. But this bond a more than human power must sever. Nature in its fairest form is fallen away from God. Man's need is of a Saviour.

4. This is what the Lord now affirms. To the amazement of His disciples, He declares that it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God. Those who, to make this less absolute than it seems, would apply it to an eastern city gate, should remember that the Lord affirms directly that that of which He is speaking is "to man impossible." On the other hand, Mark records for us the explanation that a rich man stands here for one that *trusts* in riches, which at the same time prevents

ceedingly astonished, saying to one another, And who can be saved? But Jesus, looking on them, saith, With men it is [n]impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are possible.

5 (28-31): Recompense.

5. Peter began to say to him, [o]Behold, *we* have left all and followed thee. Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no one who hath [p]left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, [or wife,]* or children, or lands, for my sake and for the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in [q]this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with [r]persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life. But [s]many first shall be last, and the last first.

6 (32-45): The victory of God.

6. And they were in the way [t]going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus was going on before them; and they were amazed; and as they followed they were afraid. And he took again to him the twelve, and began to tell them the things that were going to happen to him: [u]Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man will be delivered up to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him up to the Gentiles, and they will mock him, and scourge him, and spit on him, and kill him; and after three days he will [v]rise again.

n Lk. 1. 37. *cf.* Rom. 4. 20, 21. *cf.* Lk. 19, 2, etc.

o Matt. 19. 27-30. Lk. 18. 28-30. *cf.* Lk. 5. 27, 28.

p Matt. 10. 37, 38. *cf.* Rom. 8. 17, 18.

q *cf.* 2 Chr. 25. 9. *cf.* 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23.

r *cf.* Phil. 1. 29, 30. *cf.* Jno. 16. 1, 2.

s Matt. 20. 16. Lk. 13. 30.

t Matt. 20. 17-19. Lk. 18. 31-34.

u *cf.* ch. 8. 31. *cf.* ch. 9. 31.

v ch. 9. 9, 10.

* Some omit.

the obvious mistake of a gross literalism, and extends the principle to the poorest in actual possessions. Really he only is in the sense intended "rich," who trusts in riches: and he may do that who never acquires them. In the divinely wrought hunger of soul, the things to which the worldling turns for help become as little valuable as gold to meet desert-thirst.

The disciples in their astonishment say one to another, "Who then can be *saved?*" But salvation is of God wholly. When men have learned their need of this, there is then no difficulty.

5. Nature in itself is then hopeless; and in the child of God still there abides that which because of its tendencies Scripture calls the flesh. "In me, that is in my flesh," says the man in the experience of the seventh of Romans, "dwelleth no good thing," Of the flesh self is the centre; and into the sphere of spiritual things the flesh will intrude, how easily. Self may claim that in which (in the sense in which we are speaking) it can have no part, and take pleasure in the thought of a foremost place there. Peter's "*We* have left all and followed Thee," is just such a claim, which the Lord meets in grace with a full assurance that nothing can be left for His sake without abundant recompense, both here and hereafter. But He guards this doubly from abuse such as the carnal mind might make of it: first, by the reminder that it must be done for His sake to be rewarded: not for self, to gain the reward. Secondly, and springing out of this, "many first shall be last, and the last first," which effectually forbids self-placing anywhere.

6. But we go on beyond this, to see the victory of God over all this spirit of strife and emulation. Again He begins to warn them of His coming death and comfort them with the thought of His speedy resurrection. There is no response: fear has already fallen upon them. But presently it is seen of how contrary a spirit they are by the request of the sons of Zebedee for the two places nearest Himself in the coming Kingdom. The Lord points out to them the way

And [w]James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Teacher, we would that thou shouldest do for us what we may ask of thee. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? And they said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye [z]know not what ye ask: can ye [y]drink the cup that *I* drink, or be baptized with the baptism that *I* am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, The [z]cup that I drink ye shall drink, and with the baptism that I am baptized with shall ye be baptized; but to sit on my right hand or on my left is not mine to give, except to those for whom it hath been [a]prepared.

And when the ten heard it, they began to be much [b]displeased concerning James and John; and Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that those who are accounted to rule over the [c]nations lord it over them, and their great ones use authority over them: but so it is not among you, but whosoever willeth to be [d]great among you, he shall be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you shall be servant of all. For even the [e]Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a [f]ransom for many.

w Matt. 20. 20-28.

x cf. ch. 9. 6. *cf.* Jas. 4. 3. *cf.* Ps. 106. 15.

y cf. Matt. 26. 37-40.

z cf. Jno. 13. 36-38 with Jno. 21. 18, 19. *cf.* Phil. 3. 10. *cf.* Rev. 2. 10.

a cf. Matt. 19. 28. *cf.* 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3.

b Matt. 20. 24. *cf.* Gal. 5. 26.

c cf. Matt. 6. 31, 32.

d cf. ch. 9. 35.

e cf. Lk. 22. 27. *cf.* Jno. 6. 38, 39.

f 1 Tim. 2. 6. *cf.* Is. 53. 11, 12. Tit. 2. 14

by which He reaches this. Can they drink of His cup and be baptized with His baptism? And immediately they assure Him that they can. He tells them that in these they shall in fact partake; but the places that they seek are only His to give to those for whom it is prepared of His Father.

This awakes the indignation of the other disciples, and shows a similar spirit to be in them all. And now He shows them their great and fundamental mistake. Heaven is to be no place for the ambition of men. The Son of man came not to be ministered to but to minister: love's mission among them sought only what love alone could count a recompense. And if, "beyond all controversy, the less is blessed of the better," our dependence on Him insures that this ministry of His to us will go on for ever. If love made Him take it up, love will make Him keep it too, as surely as He is Son of man for ever, although the toil and sorrow of His work be past.

If then with Him service is but the sign of a love unending, and so can never cease, can it be different with those whom He is bringing into the glory of likeness to Himself? Can they take up service to win lordship by it, and state and authority? That were surely impossible: nay, the greatest in heaven's Kingdom is he that humbleth himself as a little child (Matt. xviii. 4). In heaven's rule, Love rules; and therefore rule is service still, most valued because it is so.

Div. 3.

The closing division of the book shows us the Lord's service perfected in His sacrificial death, the acceptance of which is seen in resurrection. But Mark goes beyond this, and further than any of the Gospels, following Him into heaven itself,—to the right hand of God. The connection of this with the sin-offering aspect of the atoning work, as here presented to us, we must consider at another time.

The Cross and the resurrection give us characteristically the second and third

DIVISION 3. (Chaps. x. 46–xvi.)

The Heart of Service revealed in Sacrifice, answered from the Heart of God in Resurrection and the Ascension to Heaven of the Offerer.

SUBDIVISION 1. (Chaps. x. 46–xiii.)

The King.

1 (x. 46-xi. 26): The barren tree.
1 (x. 46-52): Ilgbt.

1. [1] AND they come to [g] Jericho; and as he went out of Jericho, and his disciples, and a great multitude, the son of Timæus, Bartimæus, a blind man, sat by the wayside, [h] begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus the Nazarene, he began to cry out and say, [i] Son of David, Jesus, have mercy on me. And many [j] re-

[g] Matt. 20. 29-34. Lk. 18. 35-43.
[h] *cf.* Jno. 9. 1. *cf.* Acts 3. 2. *cf.* Lk. 7. 42.
[i] *cf.* Matt. 15. 22. *cf.* Matt. 21. 9 with Jno. 1. 49.
[j] *cf.* ver. 13.

subdivisions here. The first, as introductory to these, takes us back (as at this point do all the Gospels) to Matthew's view of the King, come to His own and rejected by them; the connection of which with what follows it is plain, when we realize that in this not only Israel's condition but that of the world as a whole is seen, the sin of man in its full development, for which the cross of Christ is the only possible remedy. Thus the three parts of this last division are in fit relation to one another, and form a significant whole.

SUBD. 1.

The first subdivision has also its three parts. The first of these has its central significance in the barren fig-tree, which the Lord curses for its barrenness, a figure scarcely to be mistaken by any who look below the surface, and which in Mark is woven together with the story of His purification of the temple, His Father's house. Israel, alas, for this had to be driven out of that which they had profaned. The "Canaanite (or merchantman) in the house of the Lord" had found in the favored people of God its sorrowful fulfilment.

The second part shows us, along with their hostility to the Lord, His judgment in detail of their condition. This comes out in His answers to their various and evil-designing questions and efforts to entangle Him in His talk,—efforts which end for them in disastrous confusion. He closes it with His unanswerable question to them with regard to David's Son, and then denounces to the people the heartless and ostentations religiousness of the scribes.

The third part announces (for disciples' ears alone) the coming of the rejected Son of man in glory, to deliver His believing people out of the great final tribulation into which the nation has come because, rejecting Him who came to them in His Father's name, they have received him who comes in his own.

The connection all through, as generally in Mark, is close and intimate with Matthew's Gospel; Mark, however, omitting much, especially of the dispensational details, as the marriage of the King's son, and in the prophecy of the final scenes, all that has reference to the Church and to the judgment of the nations, the separation of the sheep from the goats.

1. [1] In the three synoptic Gospels alike, the Lord's presentation of Himself to the people as their King is prefaced by the miracle at Jericho, which is expressly wrought in answer to an appeal to Him as Son of David. Matthew mentions two blind men, but Mark only one, whose name he (and not Matthew) gives. Bartimæus is simply the son of Timæus. so that he gets his personal name from his relationship. Timæus is in Greek,* "one that is prized," and "the son of

* A Greek name need scarcely be a difficulty, where Greek had been almost the common language for so many years, and where Peter, Andrew, Philip, Nicodemus, Stephen, are all Greek. Its being Greek (the common synonym of Gentile) is in fact spiritually significant, Israel's father Abraham, God's Timæus, having been called in uncircumcision, according to the apostle's argument in Rom. iv.

buked him that he should be silent; but he cried so much the [k]more, Son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still and said, Call him. And they called the blind man, saying to him, Be of good courage, rise, he calleth thee. And he, [l]casting away his garment, sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What [m]wilt thou that I should do for thee? And the blind man said unto him, [n]Rabboni, that I may recover sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go [o]thy way: thy faith hath healed thee. And immediately he recovered sight, and [p]followed him in the way.

2 (xi. 1-11): the announcement.

2 And when they [q]come near to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go into the village that is over against you, and immediately upon entering it ye shall find a colt tied, [r]whereon no man ever yet sat: loose it and bring [it]. And if any one say unto you, Why do ye this? say, The Lord hath [s]need of him, and immediately he will send it hither. And they departed, and found a colt tied at the door without, at the way round [the house], and they loose him. And some of those standing there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt? And

k *cf.* Lk. 5. 19.

l *cf.* Is. 64. 6 with Phil. 3. 7-9.

m *cf.* Jno. 5. 6, 40.

n Jno. 20. 6.

o *cf.* Jno. 11. 44 with Rom. 8. 2.

p *cf.* ch. 1. 18 with Rom. 6. 12, 13.

q Matt. 21. 1-11. Lk. 19. 29-40. Jno. 12. 12-16.

r *cf.* Jer. 31. 18. *cf.* Job 11. 12.

s *cf.* Acts 9. 13-16.

one that is prized" would well represent the state of Israel in her blindness of unbelief still "beloved for the fathers' sakes" (Rom. xi. 28). It is surely a striking name for one whom we have already looked at as on other grounds (see notes on Matt. xx. 29–34) foreshadowing the remnant of Israel in days to come, when God is preparing the way of His King to come to Zion. They need and will find, spite of the opposition of the mass by whom they are surrounded, in Jesus of Nazareth, One who is sent to "preach recovering of sight to the blind" (Luke iv. 18). To Him they will come, "casting away the garment" of religious self-righteousness, which has been ever the hindrance with the people to whom they belong. They will receive sight and follow Jesus.

Such spiritual sight given in Jericho, the world under the curse, into which Christ has come, and which still converts blind beggars into joyful followers of the Lord, is even now His witness. He had to come under this curse to redeem us from it, and the deliverance at Jericho, may well be the pledge of His victory at Jerusalem and elsewhere, though He go to present rejection at the hands of men. The blessed Servant has anticipated it all, and sees with no uncertainty the path before Him. That very rejection shall only give Him occasion for deeper service.

2 So they come near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage (the "house of unripe figs") and Bethany (the "house of affliction" or "humiliation")* significant names both for *Him;* and now He sends two of His disciples to bring to Him the colt upon which He is to ride, proclaiming His Kingdom of peace, into Jerusalem. Mark, as little as possible touching the dispensational side of things, omits from his account the mother ass (*see Matthew*). The acclamations of the multitude hail the "coming kingdom of our father David." There seems at present no opposition. He simply enters Jerusalem, goes into the temple and looks round upon all things there. Then, it being now evening, He withdraws and goes out to Bethany.

Matthew does not notice this first visit of silent contemplation on the Lord's

* More generally taken now as "house of dates," but quite conjecturally.

they said unto them even as Jesus had said; and they let them go. And they bring the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him, and he sat upon him. And many [r]spread their garments in the way; and others branches which they had cut out of the fields. And those who went before, and those who followed cried, Hosanna! [u]blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest! And he entered into Jerusalem, into the [v]temple; and having looked round upon all things, it being already evening, he [w]went out to Bethany with the twelve.

[3] (xi. 12-26): the ban upon the fig-tree and the cleansing of the house of God.

[3] And on the [x]morrow, as they came out from Bethany, he hungered. And seeing a [y]fig-tree afar off, having [z]leaves, he came, if haply he might find anything thereon; and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the [a]time of figs was not yet. And he answered and said to it, Let [b]none eat fruit of thee any more for ever. And his disciples heard it.

And they come to Jerusalem; and, entering into the temple, he began to [c]cast out the sellers and the buyers in the temple; and he overthrew the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those that sold doves; and would not suffer any one to carry a vessel through the temple. And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, [d]My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations? but ye have made it a [e]den of robbers.

t cf. ch. 10. 50. *cf.* Lk.7.38.
u Ps. 118.26. Zech. 9. 9.
v cf. Lk. 2. 46. *cf.* Jno. 18. 20.
w cf. Lk. 2. 7 with Jno. 1. 10, 11. Matt.21.17.
x Matt. 21. 18-22.
y cf. Lk. 13. 6-10.
z cf. Gen.3.7. *cf.* Ezek.17. 9. *cf.* Is. 1. 30. *cfr.* Ps. 1. 2, 3.
a cf. Lk. 19. 44.
b Matt. 23. 37-39.
c Matt. 21. 12, 13. Lk. 19. 45, 46. *cf.* Jno2.13-16. *cf.* Mal. 3. 1-6.
d Is. 56. 7. *cf.* Mi. 4. 2.
e Jer. 7. 11. *cf.* Is. 5. 7.

part, but puts the cleansing of the temple, which did not really take place till the next day, in connection with the triumphal entry. This has of course been charged upon him as a discrepancy. It is in fact the substitution of an order of thought for the order of time; and this is not infrequent in the Gospels.

This simple looking round upon everything and then turning the back upon it is very solemn. It is not judgment that is inflicted, but He finds nothing to His satisfaction, and leaves it to them, and leaves them with it. His own personal position is outside it all. The temple as His Father's house should have been His own. There, if anywhere in Israel, would have been the throne of God, and here was the King of this kingdom, the Son of the Father; and He turns His back on it. Leaving it, He leaves the city also, for Bethany, the "house of humiliation." He can only abide there.

[3] On the morrow, as He returns to the city, He hungers. A spiritual hunger was, in fact, upon Him. The zeal of His Father's house was consuming Him, with all that that house implied, as established among men—a place of approach to Him, not for Israel only, but for all nations. This had been committed to Israel's care, and their privileges upon which they prided themselves, only to look down with disdain upon the Gentiles, were really responsibilities on their behalf. The blessing of the earth depended—and still depends—upon Israel's blessing. As God's vine they had failed, and the vineyard had been laid waste; but He had suffered a remnant to come back, according to His own figure as to them, to be as "a fig-tree planted in" the desolate "vineyard" (Luke xiii. 6), to see if yet there might be fruit for Him.

Here, then, the significance of the present act is seen. The returned people stood before God with its profession of faith in Him, in striking contrast with the nations round, for whom plainly as merely heathen, "the time of figs was not yet." The fig-leaf was the promise of fruit wherever found; and therefore

And the chief priests and the scribes heard it, and [f]sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the multitude were [g]astonished at his doctrine. And when evening was come he went out [h]without the city.

And passing by, early in the morning, they saw the [i]fig-tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Rabbi, behold, the fig-tree which thou cursedst is dried up. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. Verily I say unto you that [j]whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou plucked up and cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith is coming to pass, it shall be [so] to him. Wherefore I say unto you, Whatsoever things ye [k]pray and ask for, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. And when ye stand praying, [l]forgive, if ye have aught against any, that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your offences. [But if *ye* do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your offences.*]

[f] Matt. 21. 45, 46. Lk. 19. 47, 48.
[g] ch. 1. 22, etc.
[h] ver. 11.
[i] *cf.* Lk. 23. 31. *ctr.* Ezek. 37. 11, 12.
[j] Matt. 17. 20. Lk. 17. 6. *cf.* Zech. 4. 7.
[k] Jno. 14. 13, 14. Jno. 15. 7. *cf.* Jno. 4. 50.
[l] Matt. 6. 14. *cf.* Matt. 18. 23–35.

* Omitted by some, and doubtful.

the Lord comes to it to find this. There was none: and for this He pronounces its doom.

No more is said about this here, but He goes on to Jerusalem and the temple, and what He had found at the beginning of His ministry (John ii. 13–16) He finds unchanged at the end of it. Greed was profaning the very house of God, and that which should have been a house of prayer had become a den of robbers. He purges them all out, assuming for a moment the authority which was His; but the effect is only to bring the chief priests and scribes together to plot for His destruction. As yet the fear of the people holds them back.

We return then to the actual destruction of the fig-tree, which they find next morning dried up from the roots. The Lord uses it to impress upon His disciples the power of faith in God. Not a tree merely, but a mountain would disappear in this way from the path of faith, where faith laid hold of the Invisible for it. But He joins with believing prayer the need of a tender spirit of forgiveness towards any against whom the heart might retain the sense of wrong, lest the Father's government should be made to remember one's own offences.

The Lord leaves the application both of the fig-tree and the mountain to be made by His disciples. They were evidently not yet prepared to realize the doom that Israel as a nation were bringing upon themselves, or that they might be such an obstruction as He pictured to the path of faith. The divine foresight of the end would not prevent the most assiduous tenderness in warning and entreaty till the end should come. God has taken care even to proclaim by the mouth of Jeremiah that His own prophecies of coming judgment might be set aside by a nation's repentance (Jer. xviii. 7, 8); and has even given us in Nineveh an example of this (Jonah iii. 10).

But Israel went on unrepenting until it was in fact, as a nation, sunk like the mountain of which the Lord speaks into the sea of nations round her; and the fig-tree died withered up because it had no fruit for Him who sought it. The blessing of which the Word still gives assurance for them can only be through a veritable resurrection (Ezek. xxxvii).

2. The next section is almost entirely similar to Matthew, save in the omission of two parables, and in the addition by Mark of the beautiful and signifi-

2 (xi. 27–xii.): Rejected and rejecting: the discriminative judgment.
1 (xii.-27–33): the question of authority.

2. [1] And they come again to Jerusalem; and, as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders; and they said unto him, By what [m]authority doest thou these things, and who gave thee this authority that thou shouldst do these things? And Jesus said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. The [n]baptism of John, was it from heaven or of men? answer me. And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven, he will say, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men—they feared the people: for all held John to be truly a prophet. And they answered and said to Jesus, We [o]know not. And Jesus saith unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

2 (xii.1–12): the rejection of the messengers.

[2] And he began to speak unto them in parables. A [p]man planted a vineyard, and set a [q]hedge about it, and digged a pit for the winepress, and built a tower, and let it out to [r]husbandmen, and went out of the country. And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the [s]fruit of the vineyard. And they took him, and beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they [threw stones and] * struck him on the head, and sent him away with insult. And he sent another; and him they killed; and many others: [t]beating some and killing some. Having therefore † yet one beloved [u]son, he

* Many omit. † Many read, "He had."

m Matt. 21. 23–27. Lk. 20. 1–8. *cf.* Jno. 5. 30. *cf.* Jno. 6. 57.
n *cf.* Lk. 7. 24–35.
o *cf.* Jno. 1. 19–28. *cf.* Jno. 5. 35.
p Matt. 21. 33–46. Lk. 20. 9–18.
q *cf.* Is. 5.1–7. *cf.* Ps. 80. 8–16. *cf.* Deut. 7. 2–6.
r *cf.* Matt. 25. 14. *cf.* Josh.24. 12–14. *ctr.* Jno.15. 1 with 1Co. 3. 8, 9.
s *cf.* Deut. 26. 8–14. *ctr.* Hos.10. 1. *cf.* ch.11.13.
t *cf.* 2 Chr. 16. 10. *cf.* Matt.23. 34–36. *cf.* Acts 7. 52.
u *cf.* Heb.1. 1, 2. *cf.* Jno.3.16.

cant incident of the widow's mites. It gives, as already said, the Lord's judgment in detail of Israel's condition, in her chosen leaders, who unite in opposition, though veiled, against Him. Everywhere they are met, refuted, their disguise stripped off, until He closes argument with His own triumphant question how Christ can be the Son of David. This is followed by His denunciation of the scribes, and His appraisal of all their ostentatious giving to the temple treasury as less in value than the widow's "two mites which make a farthing."

[1] The question of authority is the one first raised; upon the face of it unutterable folly; for His works bore witness of Him, and it was impossible to suppose that divine power, such as was manifest in them, could have been gained unlawfully. He refuses, therefore, to answer their question, except they answer first His own. If competent to discern as to Himself (and if not, it would be of no use to answer them), they should know as to the baptism of John, whether it was from heaven or of men. If they knew, let them answer.

But they dare not answer. On the one side they cannot excuse themselves, if it were from heaven, for not being his disciples: on the other, they could not deny his claim for fear of the people. And the only refuge left for them is in what for them is a complete and yet most insincere humiliation; they cannot tell!

[2] The parable of the two sons which Matthew gives is here omitted, and that of the vineyard comes into the second place. The thought of the vineyard was familiar to them from the prophets, who had pressed upon them the claims of

sent him unto them last, saying, They will respect my son. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the [v]heir: come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they took him, and [w]killed him, and cast him out without the vineyard. What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do? He will [x]come and destroy the husbandmen, and give the vineyard unto others. Have ye not read even this scripture, The [y]stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner: this was from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes?

And they sought to lay hold on him, and [z]feared the multitude: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them; and they left him, and went away.

3 (xii.13-17): Cæsar's portion and and God's: an unveiling.

[3] And they send to him certain of the [a]Pharisees and of the Herodians, that they might catch him in [some] matter.* And when they were come, they say unto him, Teacher, we know that thou art true, and carest not for any one: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God with truth. Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not? shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me

v *cf.* Ps. 89. 27. *cf.* Jno. 19. 15. *cf.* Acts 3. 17.
w *cf.* ch. 9. 13, 31. *cf.* Acts 2. 23. *cf.* Acts 13. 27, 28.
x *cf.* Lk. 19. 27. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 8, 9.
y Ps. 118.22. 23. 1 Pet. 2.7,8.
z ch. 11. 32.
a Matt. 22. 15-22. Lk. 20. 20-26.

*λόγος, "matter of speech."

God as to it; and they had built the sepulcres of these prophets, whom they could not deny that their fathers killed. With the murder of the One who spoke to them in their hearts, how could they deny that they were in the succession of the parable? Then came their own Scriptures to prove that the corner stone of God's building was one rejected by the builders. Clearly they could understand that all this spoke of them, and feel it enough to be maddened by it.

[3] Now they break up into parties, (Pharisees and Herodians) which unite together, however, in dexterous combination. They do not question His authority any more: they know that He is true and teaches the way of God in truth. Nor will the fear of man shut *His* mouth.

So they have a question to ask, an important one, touching closely all ranks and conditions among them, and quite apt to kindle dangerous passions. Pharisees and Herodians were divided about it: here it was for Him to settle: Should they give tribute to Cæsar? Aye, or no?

But they cannot dig deep enough to hide from Him the hypocrisy of that question, that they were merely, as He tells them, tempting Him. Yet He will not decline it: let them only bring Him the tribute money. And they bring it: and there is the image of Cæsar stamped broadly upon it.

They cannot deny,—they are not suffered to ignore the fact,—that this is Cæsar's money. But how much lay hid under this for those that were still capable of entertaining such questions. How long they had given up any full, entire reliance upon the Almighty, the God of their father Abraham, and by profession their own! They had leaned upon another arm than His. They had coveted the riches of a world which Abraham had refused. They were trafficking with Cæsar's money, and must pay him back his money. Issachar in their father Jacob's prophecy had proved but too surely their type: Issachar, the "bony ass, couching between the hurdles: and he saw the land that it was good, and rest that it was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became servant to tribute."

a penny,* that I may see it. And they brought it. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cæsar's. And Jesus said unto them, [b]Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's. And they wondered much at him.

[4] (xii.18-27): the failure of human tests in divine things.

[4] And there come unto him [c]Sadducees, who say that there is no resurrection, and they asked him, saying, Teacher, [d]Moses wrote unto us, if a man's brother die, and leave a wife behind him, and leave no child, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. There were seven brethren, and the first took a wife, and, dying, left no seed; and the second took her, and died, and neither did *he* leave seed; and the third likewise. And the seven [took her and]† left no seed: last of all, the woman died also. In the resurrection, [when they shall rise again,]† whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her as wife. And Jesus said unto them, Is it not on this account ye err, [e]not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God? For when they rise from among the dead, they neither [f]marry nor are given in marriage; but are as angels in heaven. But as regards the dead that they rise, have ye not read in the book of Moses, at the bush, how God spake unto him, saying, I [g]am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

[5] (xii.28-34): as to the true responsibility to God.

[5] And one of the [h]scribes who had come up, and had heard them reasoning together, and knew that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The

b *cf.* Rom. 13. 1-8. *cf.* Tit. 3. 1. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 13-17.

c Matt. 22. 23-33. Lk. 20. 27-38.

d Deut. 25. 5, 6. *cfr.* Eph. 1. 3.

e *cf.* Acts 2. 24-31. *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 4.

f *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 42-52. *cf.* Gal. 3. 28.

g Gen. 28. 13. Ex. 3. 6. *cf.* Rom. 4. 17.

h Matt. 22. 35-40.

* "*A denarius.*" † Many omit.

Give Cæsar then what is his: no use to expect divine help to ignore what their sin had brought them into. No! and yet a way there was—a way which they had never taken: give God also His own! how surely then would the burden pass from their back, and the rest they longed for be obtained! "My yoke is easy, and my burden light."

"And they marvelled at Him."

[4] But they are not yet silenced; and after the Pharisee and the Herodian appears the Sadducee: a not unusual order at any time. With them we find the intrusion of mere human thought into spiritual things, and which with its own beggarliness would beggar heaven. But they know neither the Scriptures,—when did an infidel ever know the Scriptures?—nor the power of God. The Lord proves to them how the simplest sayings of God may contain what would enrich us for ever and we do not find it there. Shall we ever awake to the need we have of putting under adequate tillage the rich land which God has given us? As to the Lord's argument here, we can add little or nothing to what has been said in Matthew.

[5] As to the next question, Mark shows us under the tempting spirit of which Matthew speaks a certain effect nevertheless produced in the man who asks it. How apt we are to fight with the truth just when it is gaining access into our hearts! and how contrary often are the thoughts which unite to move us! In

first [commandment of all]* is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. [This is the first commandment].* And the second [like it]* is this: [j]Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is not another commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Right, teacher; thou hast spoken with truth: for he is [k]one, and there is none besides him; and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, [and with all the soul,]* and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself is much [l]more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered with intelligence, he said unto him, Thou art [m]not far from the kingdom of God. And no one any longer dared to question him.

6 (xii.35-37): the scribes conquered on their own ground.

6 And Jesus answered and said, as he taught in the temple, [n]How say the scribes that the Christ is the Son of David? for David himself [o]said in the Holy Spirit, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies a footstool for thy feet. David himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he his son? And the [p]common people heard him gladly.

7 (xii.38-40): completely judged.

7 And he said to them in his teaching, [q]Beware of the scribes, who desire to walk about in long robes, and [r]salutations in the market-places, and [s]chief seats in the synagogues, and chief places at feasts, who devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive a far greater judgment.

i Deut. 6. 4, 5. Lk. 10. 27.
j Lev. 19.18. Rom. 13. 9, 10. Gal. 5. 14. Jas. 2. 8.
k Deut. 4. 35, 39. Deut.32.39. Is. 45. 6, 22.
l 1 Sa. 15. 22. *cf.* Ps.51.16, 17. *cf.* Mi.6.6-9. *cf.* Hos. 6.6.
m *cf.* ch. 10. 21. *cf.* Acts 26. 28, 29.
n Matt. 22. 41-46. Lk. 20. 41-44.
o Ps. 110. 1. *cf.* Is. 11. 1. *cf.* Mi. 5. 2. *cf.* Rev. 22. 16.
p *cf.* Lk.15.1. *cf.* Matt.11. 5. *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 26-29.
q Lk. 20. 45-47.
r Matt. 23. 7-12. *ctr.* 1 Cor. 4. 9-16.
s Lk 11. 43. Matt. 23. 6. *ctr.* Jas. 2. 1-5. *cf.* 3 Jno. 9.
t Matt.23.14. *cf.* Rom. 2. 13. *cf.* Lk. 12. 47, 48.

* Many omit.

the scribe before us we find a further effect of the answer given to his question, and the Lord Himself pronounces him "not far from the Kingdom of God." We are not told that he ever entered it; but we have good reason for hope that he had reached the place in which he was as the result of a seeking which could not fail of divine guidance. It needed some boldness to proclaim so heartily his acceptance of the truth, (simple as it may seem and is,) that love to God and to one's neighbor is "more than all whole burnt-offering and sacrifices," and this in sympathetic admiration of Jesus of Nazareth, and in the midst of those who were His open adversaries.

With the exception of this, Matthew's account is almost exactly that of Mark, and we cannot add to what is said of it in the former Gospel.

6 After the scribe's confession, "no one any longer dared to question Him." But He now turns upon His silenced enemies with a question on His own part. The charge against Him was that "He made Himself the Son of God." The creed of the scribes was that Messiah was simply Son of David. He produces David himself therefore in proof that He must be more: otherwise how, as in the 110th psalm, could the father call his son his lord? To this they have, and could have, no answer.

7 He proceeds to warn the people against the scribes. Mark does not however reproduce here the detailed judgment which is given in Matthew. He speaks of their love of display, of human applause, of leadership, their very prayers a

8 (xii. 41-44): a turn of the page.

[8] And Jesus, sitting down over against the [u] treasury, beheld how the multitude cast money into the treasury; and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a poor [v] widow and cast in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called his disciples and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than all they that have cast into the treasury: for they all have cast in of their superfluity; but she of her destitution did cast in all that she had, the [w] whole of her living.

3 (xiii.): His manifestation in glory.

1 (1-13): the beginnings of birth-pains.

3. [1] And as he went forth out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Teacher, [z] behold what manner of stones, and what manner of buildings. And Jesus said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left here one stone upon another* that shall not be [y] thrown down. And as he sat on the

u Lk. 21. 1-4.

v *cf.* ver. 40. *cf.* 1 Ki. 17. 9. *cf.* Lam. 1. 1-4.

w *cf.* 2 Cor. 8. 1-5, 12. *cf.* Phil. 2. 17, 30.

x Matt. 24. 1, 2. Lk. 21. 5, 6. *cfr.* 1 Cor. 3. 11-15. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 4-9.

y *cf.* 1 Ki. 9. 7. *cf.* Jer. 7. 14.

* Literally, "a stone upon a stone."

hypocrisy, while they devoured in their greed the substance of the poor and unprotected. Such were the religious chiefs of the nation, and their character was one most easily to be discerned surely. Yet these blind leaders were as blindly followed.

[8] He turns the page, and shows us amid such a state of things what the eye of God could discern, and His heart delight in, the act of a poor widow, too poor to tempt even the rapacity of a scribe, yet not too poor to put into the temple-treasury a gift beyond all the rich gifts of the wealthiest worshipers. "Two mites which make a farthing:" really about three quarters of a farthing! but the value of it, as our Lord declares, was not according to the market—according to its buying capacity, but intangible and spiritual. The two mites were all the means she had: "all her living." She had put her heart in with it: a heart that had no reserve,—that would keep nothing back from God. The value of it was that of sacrifice, and could not miss appreciation by One who was Himself the Great Sacrifice, or by Him who spared not for us His own Son.

But this was one among all that had cast in; and the commendation takes the form of condemnation; the joy of approbation is only as of a sweet note amid dissonance. Nay, the existence of this one verity of goodness and devotedness seems only to make worse the awful falsehood and self-service and arrogancy of pretension all around. Israel remains unhealed, unhelped, with her sin upon her, and going on to the culminating sin of sins—the Cross.

And, as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man. There is naturally no difference. The lesson here is lesson for us all, and the exception is of divine grace only. Thus the Cross was not man's sin only, but the grace that meets his sin: and

"The very spear that pierced Thy side
Drew forth the blood to save."

3. But before the Cross is reached, the veil is once more for a moment drawn aside, and we are given to see the One rejected and disowned of men coming in the glory of heaven when unbelief shall be possible no more, and resistance beyond a moment's possible thought. We have been already through this great prophecy in Matthew, whom Mark in what he gives of it almost entirely resembles. No doubt there are certain differences, and for these and for the resemblances alike there must be spiritual reasons which we should be able to give some account of. But for this the Gospels in their entirety must be better known, and each part apprehended in the light of the whole. Too little believing work has been done in this direction to enable us to say much to the purpose as to it. That there is divine wisdom in it all it should not need to say;

mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately, [z]Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things are about to be fulfilled? And Jesus [answering them]* began to say, Take heed that no one lead you [a]astray: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am [he]; and shall lead many astray. And when ye shall hear of [b]wars and rumors of wars, be not troubled: these things must needs come to pass; but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be [c]earthquakes in [divers] places; and there shall be famines [and troubles]:* these things are the beginning of travail.

But take ye heed to yourselves: for they shall [d]deliver you up to councils; and in synagogues shall ye be beaten; and ye shall stand before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony unto them. And the [e]gospel must first be preached unto all the nations. And when they shall lead you away to deliver you up, be not [f]anxious beforehand as to what ye shall say; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Spirit. And [g]brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his child; and children shall rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be [h]hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.

* Many omit.

z Matt. 24. 3, etc. Lk. 21. 7, etc. *cf.* Lk. 17. 20-37.

a *cf.* 2Thess. 2. 1-3.

b *cf.* Rev. 6. 2-4.

c Rev. 6. 12. Rev. 8. 5.

d *cf.* Matt. 10. 17, 18. *cf.* Jno. 16. 2.

e Matt. 24. 14.

f Matt. 10. 19. Lk. 12. 11, 12. Lk. 21. 14. *cf.* Acts 5. 29-32. *cf.* Acts 26. 1, 2, etc.

g *cf.* Jer 9. 4. *cf.* Mi. 7. 5, 6. Matt. 10. 21, 34-36. Lk. 21. 16.

h Matt. 24. 9. Lk. 21. 17. *cf.* Jno. 16. 1-3. *cf.* Acts 28. 22. *cf.* 1 Pet. 4. 14.

but one may have to confess ignorance, which the many with whom we share it prevent being felt with the shame which should belong to it. To avoid mere repetition the notes on Matthew must be referred to throughout.

[1] The introductory portion no doubt takes in, in its general characteristics, the present time; though Christianity, as such, is not contemplated in it. It partakes in this way in the character of Old Testament prophecy, in which the present dispensation has no place; save, indeed, as you may call a type a prophecy, and then we can find such parabolic utterances not seldom. The prophecy of our Lord here has, in Matthew's version of it, quite similarly its Christian portion couched in this parabolic style. The time had not yet come for plainer speech. Mark and Luke alike omit all this Christian part; while the indefiniteness of this introductory portion leaves room for what is not explicitly found there.

Mark, as well as Luke, emphasizes in a special manner the persecutions that the disciples would have to endure, which in Luke are declared to take place before the signs among the nations. They are, therefore, persecutions of the early Christian days, such as the Acts show us to have taken place as soon as the new message of salvation was proclaimed. In this way the testimony to governors and kings was to be given; and they were, without any anxiety about it, to rely entirely upon the Spirit of God for all that they should say. Even the natural love of kindred would be destroyed by the spirit of hostility to Christ. He that endured to the end would be saved.

[2] The last clause, while as a general principle it applies to all, has certainly a

2 (14-23): the abomination of desolation.

[2] But when ye shall see the [i]abomination of desolation standing where it ought not (he that readeth, let him understand), then let them that are in Judea [j]flee to the mountains, and let him that is upon the house-top not go down, nor enter in, to take anything out of his house; and let him that is in the field not turn back to take his cloak. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! And pray ye that it* be not in the winter. For those days shall be a [k]tribulation such as there hath not been the like from the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never shall be. And except the Lord had [l]shortened the days, no flesh would be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days. And then, if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is the Christ; or, Lo, there! believe it not: for there shall arise [m]false Christs and false prophets, and shall show signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. But take ye heed: behold, I have told you all things beforehand.

3 (24-27): the appearing of Christ.

[3] But in those days, [n]after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall be falling from heaven, and the [o]powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see the [p]Son of man coming in clouds, with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and [q]gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

4 (28-37): watchfulness on the way.

[4] Now from the [r]fig-tree learn the parable. When its branch already becometh tender and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. So also ye, when

* Some read, "your flight."

i Matt. 24. 15-20. Dan. 9. 27. *cf.* Rev. 13. 14-18.
j *cf.* Rev. 12. 6. *cf.* Lk. 21. 20-24. *cf.* Zech. 14. 4, 5.
k Dan. 12. 1. *cf.* Rev. 7. 14.
l *cf.* Is. 26. 20. *cf.* Dan. 9. 27 with Rev. 12. 12-14.
m Matt. 24. 11, 23, 24 with Rev. 13. 11-18. *cf.* 2 Thess. 2. 3-12.
n Matt. 24. 29. *cf.* Joel 2. 31. Lk. 21. 25, 26. *cf.* Rev. 8. 12.
o *cf.* Heb. 12. 26-29. *cf.* Dan. 8. 10, 11.
p Dan. 7. 13. Matt. 24. 30. Lk. 21. 27. Rev. 1. 7. Rev. 19. 11.
q *cf.* Matt. 13. 30, 41-43. Matt. 24. 31. *cf.* Ps. 50. 5.
r Matt. 24. 32-35. Lk. 21. 29-33. *cf.* Song 7. 12.

special reference to the time of the end, and the Lord goes on immediately to the abomination standing in the holy place, "where" (above all) "it ought not:" the very place in which idolatrous worship would be the most open defiance of Him who had peremptorily forbidden it. This, as we have seen in Matthew, undoubtedly refers to days that are yet to come, after the present dispensation is ended by the removal of the saints to meet the Lord in the air, and when the "remnant of His brethren," as Micah declares, "shall return to the children of Israel" (Micah v. 3): that is, when those converted to God in Israel will no longer find their place as now in the body of Christ, but share the national hopes and promises of the ancient people of God.

All the warnings of the great tribulation following here are almost word for word as we find them in Matthew, with the omission only of the reference to the sabbath, and the danger of deception as to His being in the desert or the secret chambers.

[3] The signs which precede the coming of the Lord follow, and then the Son of man, coming in the clouds of heaven, sends forth His angels to gather together His elect from the four winds,—Israel, once more His people, from their long dispersion.

[4] The parable of the revival of Israel's fig-tree from her winter sleep, with

ye see these things coming to pass, know that it is nigh —at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This [s]generation shall in no wise pass away, till all these things come to pass. [t]Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall in no wise pass away. But of that [u]day or of that hour knoweth no one, no not the angels that are in heaven, neither the [v]Son, but the Father. Take heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is. It is as [w]when a man, away out of the country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, and to [x]each one his work, hath commanded also the porter to watch. Watch therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning: lest, coming suddenly, he find you [y]sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, [z]Watch.

s *cf.* Matt. 10. 23. *cf.* Rom. 9. 28.
t *cf.* Matt. 5. 18. *cf.* Jer. 31. 35-37.
u *cf.* Acts 1. 7. *cf.* 1 Thess. 5. 1-10.
v *cf.* Phil. 2. 7 with John 5. 30. *ctr.* John 6. 30.
w Matt. 24. 45-51.
x *cf.* Matt. 25. 14, etc. *cf.* Rom. 12. 6, etc.
y *cf.* Rom. 13. 11-14. *cf.* Eph. 5. 14.

cf. 1 Thess. 5. 5-7. z Matt. 24. 42; Matt. 25. 13; *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 13.

what follows to the thirty-second verse, is again almost word for word with Matthew. But Mark alone, in recording the Lord's declaration that "of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven," inserts "neither the Son."* This the Lord's character as the Son of God in service sufficiently explains. "The servant knoweth not what his lord doeth." And to the Corinthians the apostle says, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified." It is not a question of His divine knowledge, but of what He knew as about His Father's business, as the apostle at Corinth knew nothing but the Crucified One.

It has been urged against this that it is not in this sense that no man or angel knoweth; but this as an objection has no force. For the point of our Lord's words is the inaccessibleness *to man* of this knowledge. There was none to whom one could go for this knowledge: neither man nor angel could communicate it, nor the Son either, as the apostle of His Father's will. It is a pregnant example of how we need to apprehend the divisions of Scripture according to their proper significance, in order to get the details rightly. "Take ye heed, watch and pray," the Lord adds, "for ye know not when the time is."

Notice the interests which Christ has here. He is going up to where He was before,—to the Father's presence and joy; yet He presents Himself here as having His house on earth, leaving it for a time and coming back to it, to those who have been entrusted with the work and authority of it in the meantime: a theme upon which Matthew dwells more at large. The master of the house comes back at an unknown hour, "at even, midnight, cock-crowing, or in the morning." Later it cannot be, for He of whom this is spoken Himself *brings* the day. But with the uncertainty, watchfulness is imperative: the true disciple must not be caught asleep.

Subd. 2.

We come now to the Cross. Every view of Christ that the Gospels give connects with the Cross. Every step He took in this world led Him to the Cross. Men's voices decreed Him to be worthy of death. The multitude, in the land where He had rained miracles of mercy, shouted "Crucify Him." Man's wickedness gave Him the Cross. Man's need led Him to it. The righteousness and love—the whole glory of God—find in it their fullest and their eternal display.

* It is found, however, in some copies of Matthew: see notes Matt. xxiv. 36.

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chaps. xiv., xv.)

The Cross.

SECTION 1. (chap. xiv. 1-52.)

The cup chosen.

1 (1-11): The traitor's choice and the occasion.
1 (1, 2): the purpose.
2 (3-9): love and utilitarianism.

1. [1] NOW after two days was the [a]passover and unleavened bread; and the chief priests and the scribes were seeking how they might lay hold of him by craft and kill him: for they said, Not at the feast, lest haply there might be a tumult of the people.

[2] And [b]when he was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as he was at table, there came a woman having an alabaster cruse of [c]ointment of pure nard,* very precious: and she brake the cruse, and poured it on his head. Now there were some [d]indignant among themselves, and saying, Why was this waste of the ointment made? for this ointment could have been sold for more than three hundred pence,† and given to the poor.

a Matt. 26. 1-5. Lk. 22. 1, 2. Jno. 11. 55-57.

b Matt. 26. 6-13. Jno. 12. 1-8.

c *cf.* Ex. 30. 34-38 with Song 1. 3, 12, 13. *cf.* Ps. 45. 8.

d *cf.* Lk. 18. 15.

* Or "spikenard." † "Denarii."

Sec. 1.

The Gospel of Mark shows us the Cross in its sin-offering character, as already stated, Matthew giving the trespass-offering. These two Gospels, as having alike the Lord's cry of abandonment, most evidently represent the offerings which as emphasizing the judgment of sin are not "sweet savor." The distinction has been pointed out in the Introduction (pp. 26–28), and we shall have to touch afresh upon its proofs and illustrations as we go through this closing portion. The essence of the sin-offering is that "cup" which in Matthew's narrative of the agony in the garden has been already before us, and the Lord's choice of it there surely characterizes this first section. Matthew and Mark, it will be seen, cling closely together here as elsewhere, while there is also a difference which is characteristic in the case of each.

1. [1] It is the divine will to which Christ bows in taking the cup. It is not to be wondered at that, here at the outset, that divine will should make itself apparent, overruling, controlling, working by, the various and conflicting wills of men. This is what we find in the introductory portion here, of which the last two verses show how and how far the first two were fulfilled, while what comes between shows what brought about the traitor's action.

The hearts of the chief priests were set on mischief; but they were permitted thus to bring about the will of God for an infinite blessing. Yet their plots are not permitted to entangle the Lamb of the sacrifice: these are anticipated; and although He is delivered into their hands, yet it is open-eyed and unresisting. They must dishonor themselves by purchasing treachery with the blood-money, soon to be hurled back at them by their miserable tool, with words which must have haunted them ever after. Not even *they* dare put into the treasury that "price of blood."

[2] In the midst of all this there comes the beauteous story of the woman's ointment, always to be told wherever the gospel is preached, for a memorial of her: protest as it is against the utilitarianism which in the gospel itself would make Christ of less account than the "poor" who are to be benefited by Him. Ah, let us remember the claims of the Christ of God, if the poor themselves are not to suffer. This utilitarianism may well hide under it a Judas as chief instigator, while it seduces with its fair seeming even true disciples.

The spikenard is for His burial. That which she has that is precious here goes into the grave with Christ; and though He is not there now, the doctrine of Christ goes further for the Christian: for we ourselves are dead and buried

And they murmured against her. But Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For the poor ye have always with you, and when ye will ye can do good to them; but [e]me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she hath come beforehand* to anoint my body for the [f]burial. And verily I say unto you, Wherever the gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that this woman hath done shall be spoken of for a [g]memorial of her.

3 (10, 11): fulfilment of the purpose.

3 And [h]Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, that he might deliver him up to them. And they, when they heard it, were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might, at a good opportunity, deliver him up.

2 (12-31): Love's witness to His disciples with the cross in sight.

1 (12-17): the preparation of the passover.

2. [1] And the [i]first day of unleavened bread, when they slew the passover, his disciples say unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayest eat the passover? And he [j]sendeth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow

e *cf.* Lk. 5. 35.

f *ctr.* Matt. 16. 22, 23. *cf.* Phil. 3. 10.

g *cf.* Jno. 11. 2. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 10, 11.

h Matt. 26. 14–16. Lk. 22. 3–6.

i Matt. 26. 17–19. Lk. 22. 7–13. *cf.* Jno. 13. 1.

j *cf.* ch. 11. 1. *cf.* Jno. 2. 6–10.

* Literally, "anticipated."

with Him, and in Him alone we live, where He is gone. Thus we are identified with Him, to seek His interests only, as *He* secures *ours*. Woe will it be to any who sacrifice the claims of Christ for any other. The universe hangs upon Him: "in Him all things subsist:" "all things were created by Him and for Him"; and nothing can be right that is not in its due place of relationship to Him.

[3] The traitor understands more truly than many Christians the significance of the burial of Christ. The three hundred pence are gone for him without possible recovery. The bag he has carried will soon be as unprofitable. He must get what he can, if he sell Christ for it: and all they to whom Christ is offered and who turn away from Him to grasp the world instead, are *they* not after their manner selling Christ too? and valuing Him perhaps no higher than he did?

2. We follow on now to see the Lord at His last passover with His disciples before He suffers, and instituting His own memorial feast to take its place. The Old Testament is about to give place to the New, and He who is Lord of the sabbath and of the sacrificial rites fulfilled in Him, shows Himself Master of the future which He predicts, and of His own part in it, amid enemies that surround Him, and adverse conditions that seem to hold Him in their grasp. But the ram of consecration can be held only by its horns: it is His very power that makes Him submit and serve, while divine love contemplates the blessed end of all. And those around Him now, the few sheep so soon to be scattered, are the objects of His unfailing care, which would prepare them for the trial so near at hand. This, especially in the synoptics; while John shows us at this time the full out-pouring of His heart, in which, far beyond the present trial, He enters into the blessings of the new era coming in. John's is the Christian Gospel, and, not here alone but throughout, occupies itself with glories which even Christians have feebly apprehended.

[1] Mark gives, as Matthew does not, the special signs which would assure the disciples when they would have reached the house in which He would eat the passover. Was it not on their account that they were permitted thus to see how perfectly the apprehension of the minutest details of the future was possessed by Him. Dispensationally also, was not the man with but the pitcher of water

him; and wherever he shall enter in, say unto the master of the house, The teacher saith, Where is the guestchamber for me, where I may eat the passover with my disciples? And he will himself show you a large upper room furnished [and] ready; and there prepare for us. And the disciples departed and went into the city, and found as he had said to them. And they prepared the passover. And when the even was come, he cometh with the twelve.

2 (18-21): the traitor pointed to.

[2] And as they were at table and eating, Jesus said Verily I say unto you, that [k]one of you, who is eating with me, shall deliver me up. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him, one by one, Is it I?* And he said unto them, It is one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish. Because the Son of man goeth, as it is written of him, but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is delivered up: [l]good were it for that man if he had not been born.

3 (22-25): the memorial.

[3] And as they were eating, Jesus [m]took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave it to them, and said, Take it: [n]this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my [o]blood of the† covenant, which is shed for many. Verily I say unto you that I will drink [p]no more of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

4 (26-31): testing.

[4] And when they had [q]sung a hymn, they went out unto the Mount of Olives. And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended: for it is [r]written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

k Matt. 26. 20-25. Lk. 22. 21-23. Jno. 13.21-30. *cf.* Ps.55.12-14.

l *cf.* Jno. 6. 70, 71. *cf.* Jno. 17. 12. *cf.* Acts 1. 25.

m Matt. 26. 26-29. Lk. 22. 19, 20. *cf.*1 Cor.11. 20-34. *cf.* Acts 20. 7.

n 1 Cor. 10. 16. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 24. *cf.* Heb.10. 5, 10.

o *cf.*1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. *cf.* Heb.10. 19.

p *cf.*Is.53.10, 11. *cf.* Heb.12. 2.

q Matt. 26. 30. *ctr.* ver.34.

r Matt. 26. 31, 32. Zech. 13. 7.

* Some add "and another, Is it I?" † Many add, "new."

passing on to the place whence presently the rivers of living water were to flow forth? Indeed, the Old Testament had prepared the place already, which He alone could fill with His glory. Now He is come, for whom it is prepared.

[2] Now they must learn from His own lips that one of the twelve should deliver Him up. It was needful that they should be prepared for this uttermost wickedness, which, however, like so much else, they do not seem to have understood in its real character. It was needful also to the divine love which would not give up even a Judas without warning, to let him know that "even the night" was "light about" him. Scripture too had forewarned and pointed at him. And the Lord adds His awful warning: "good were it for that man if he had not been born."

[3] The institution of the Supper follows, almost in the words of Matthew. Mark omits "for the remission of sins," and for "My Father's Kingdom" substitutes "the Kingdom of God."

[4] They sing a hymn and go out to the Mount of Olives. And there follows now the warning of the trial coming from the smiting of the Shepherd. All would be stumbled; but He carries on their thoughts to His resurrection and going before them into Galilee. Peter protests more than once in his vehement way that he never would be stumbled; and when the Lord adds that he would that night thrice deny Him, he still more stoutly protests that, though he should die with Him, he will not deny Him. He does not discern that this very

But after that I am [s]risen, I will go before you into Galilee. But [t]Peter said unto him, Though all shall be offended, yet will not I. And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee that thou to-day, [even] this night, before the cock crow twice, shalt thrice deny me. But he spake exceeding vehemently, If I should have to die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. And [u]so also said they all.

3 (32–42): Gethsemane.

3. And they [v]come unto a place, whose name is Gethsemane; and he saith unto his disciples, Sit ye here while I shall pray. And he [w]taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly amazed and sore troubled. And he saith unto them, My soul is plunged in grief, [even] to death: remain here and watch. And going forward a little, he [x]fell upon the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass away from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible with thee: take away this cup from me; yet not what I will, but what thou wilt. And he cometh and findeth them [y]sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? canst thou not watch one hour? watch and pray, that ye come not into temptation: the [z]spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. And he went away again and prayed, saying the same thing. And he came again and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy; and they knew not what to answer him. And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest. It is enough: the [a]hour is come; behold, the Son of man is delivered up into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand who delivereth me up.

4 (43–52): The yielding and the testing.

4. And [b]immediately, while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, cometh up, and with him a multitude with swords and staves from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. Now he that delivered him

s ch. 16. 7. Matt. 28. 7, 10, 16.
t Matt. 26. 33–35. Lk. 22. 31–34. Jno. 13. 36–38. *cf.* 1 Cor. 4. 4 with Phil. 3. 3.
u cf. Prov. 27. 19.
v Matt. 26. 36–46. Lk. 22. 39–46. Jno. 18. 1, 2.
w cf. ch. 5. 37. *cf.* ch. 9. 2. *cf.* Jno. 12. 27.
x cf. Heb. 5. 7, 8. *cf.* Ps. 102, title. *cf.* 2 Cor. 13. 4.
y cf. ch. 10. 38. *cf.* Ps. 88. 18.
z cf. Gal. 5. 17.
a cf. Jno. 7. 30 with Jno. 13. 1.
b Matt. 26. 47–50. Lk. 22. 47, 48. Jno. 18. 3–9. Acts 1. 16.

strength of his is his weakness. And the others with as little discernment repeat his protest.

3. The agony in Gethsemane is told alike in Matthew and in the present Gospel; and we have already considered it. Not the view of death nor of any attendant suffering could move Christ after this manner. It would be dishonor to Him to suppose it. There is but one thing mighty enough to do so, and this connects it with the surpassing agony of the Cross, the forsaking of God. This, we shall find that Mark, by the abridgement or omission of other things, brings into emphatic prominence: it is the full reality of substitution, the Sinless in the sinner's place; and it is this that He is anticipating here.

4. Judas comes up with his band of men from the chief priests and scribes, and into such hands He surrenders Himself for the accomplishment of His Father's will. The disciples are struggling against it,—fighting, and then fleeing. His reproof of them is not given here, but only of the multitudes. Exceptional in Mark is the story of the young man clad in a linen or muslin garment (a *sindon*), which when they lay hold upon him, he leaves in their hands, and escapes from them naked.

up had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that is he; lay hold of him and lead him away safely. And when he was come, immediately he came to him, and saith unto him, Rabbi, and [c]kissed him affectionately. And they laid their hands upon him and took him. But [d]one of those who stood by drew his sword, and smote the servant of the high priest, and struck off his ear. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out as against a [e]robber, with swords and staves, to take me? I was daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye took me not: but [this is] that the [f]scriptures might be fulfilled. And they all [g]forsook him and fled. And a certain young man followed him with a linen cloth cast about him, over his naked [body], and they lay hold upon him. But he, [h]leaving the linen cloth behind, fled from them naked.

c cf. Ps. 55. 21. cf. Ps. 62. 4. cf. Ezek. 33. 31.
d Matt. 26. 51-54. Lk. 22. 49-51. Jno. 18. 10, 11.
e Matt. 26. 55, 56. Lk. 22. 52, 53. cf. Lk. 22. 37.
f cf. Jno. 18. 9. cf. Jno. 19. 24.
g ver. 27. cf. Ps. 31. 11. cf. Ps. 142. 4.
h cf. ver. 54.

SECTION 2. (Chaps. xiv. 53–xv. 15.)

The false condemnation.

1 (xiv. 53-72): The true charge, and the truth charged.
1 (53-65): the confession of the Master.

1. [1] And they led Jesus away to the [i]high priest; and there come together* all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. And Peter followed him afar off, even

i Matt. 26. 57, etc. Lk. 22. 54, etc. Jno. 18. 13, etc.

* Some add "to him."

Significant it seems that the *sindon*, though generally spoken of as a night-dress, was such a wrapper as was used to enwrap the dead, and is actually, in the only other case in the New Testament, applied to that in which the Lord's body was wrapped (Matt. xxvii. 59; ch. xv. 46; Luke xxiii. 53). It came to be used for any light garment made of this material, and so might be a night-dress; but does not seem to be the word for this specifically.

Its connection with the dead has suggested an allegorical meaning for the story here, at a time when all facts seem to allegorize (if there be even any exception in this way as to Scripture facts). It has been spoken* of as suggestive of the vanity of human effort against the Christ of God. The priests and people, Herod and Pilate, got nothing of the Man against whom they combined but the grave-clothes empty of their temporary occupant. The living Person had escaped: the true life was untouched. And this might be a parable as to all His followers, to whom indeed, as in Christ before God, the vestment of the body is but as it were the light garment of the dead, in whom a hidden life resides not to be touched of death: "the gates of hades cannot prevail against it." In the midst of a hostile world, the Lord of life has well provided for His own.

Sec. 2.

The condemnation of the Lord—trial in any real sense there was not—was two-fold. Before the high priest and council it was upon the true charge, and the truth it was that was charged against Him. He was condemned on His own confession of the truth, that He was the Son of God. Before Pilate they change this accusation for another, that He claimed to be King of the Jews: this for the obvious reason that they can plead: "Whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar." These things naturally appear in all the Gospels, though with different emphasis and omissions as to particular details, according to the different line of truth in each. Matthew and Mark, as usual, come nearest together; John is the most distinct.

1. [1] The confession of the Master is set before us in evident contrast with the

* In the Sermons of Henry Melville.

within into the court of the high priest; and he was sitting with the officers, and [j] warming himself in the light [of the fire]. Now the chief priests and the whole council sought witness against Jesus to put him to death, and found none. For many bare [k] false witness against him, and their witness agreed not. And certain persons rose up and bare false witness against him, saying, We heard him say, I will [l] destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days will build another made without hands. And neither thus did their witness agree. And the high priest rose up in the midst and asked Jesus, saying, [m] Answerest thou nothing? What is it that these bear witness against thee? But he was [n] silent and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him and saith unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One? And Jesus said, [o] I am: and ye shall see the Son of man [p] sitting at the right hand of power, and [q] coming with the clouds of heaven. And the high priest [r] rent his clothes, and saith, What further need have we of witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all [s] condemned him [as] worthy of death. And some began to [t] spit upon him, and to cover his face and buffet him, and say unto him, Prophesy. And the officers struck him with the palms of their hands.

2 (66-72): the denial of the disciple.

[2] And while [u] Peter was below in the court, there came

[j] Lk. 22. 55. Jno. 18. 18. cf. Jno. 21. 9. cf. Eph. 5. 11 with Is. 50. 11.
[k] Matt. 26. 59-61. cf. Ps. 35. 11.
[l] Jno. 2. 18-22. ch. 15. 29.
[m] Matt. 26. 62.
[n] Is. 53. 7.
[o] Matt. 26. 63, 64. cf. Lev. 5. 1.
[p] ch. 16. 19. Ps. 110. 1. Lk. 22. 69.
[q] Matt. 25. 31. Dan. 7. 13. Rev. 1. 7.
[r] Matt. 26. 65. cf. 2 Ki. 19. 1.
[s] Matt. 26. 66. cf. Jno. 19. 7. cf. Lev. 24. 16.
[t] cf. Is. 50. 6. cf. Is. 52. 14.
[u] Matt. 26. 69-75. Lk. 22. 56-62. Jno. 18. 25-27.

denial of the disciple. In every part of this scene man is exposed; consistent only in wickedness, unreliable and inconstant where truest in heart. His self-confidence is his weakness; his weakness, known and owned, his only strength. The Second Man stands alone amid a ruined world; most glorious in this utter desolation; all contradictions uniting to approve Him; all depths to place Him highest. The simple language of the evangelists, putting not an additional word even of emotion—not an irrepressible note of wonder or of praise, to the mere recital of His words, His deeds, His sufferings, is in fact the hush of the sanctuary of His presence, the only fit celebration of that unique glory with which nothing else must or can mingle.

Before the high priest the false witnesses are condemned by their contradiction of each other. They *sought* witnesses for the purpose that was in their hearts before. And are not those who bring such witness, commonly, if not constantly, of such a spirit? Do not they dare even to search Scripture to justify the condemnation they have determined on already? And yet how often are they obliged to put out of court their own witnesses! How little can they quote without misquoting. It was they who even now were seeking to destroy the temple of God, as His words had implied they would; and it was no other could replace this, but He would raise it up again. Still there was no agreement: and the high priest turns to Jesus, to make Him answer what had need of none, and thus make something of what was nothing. He is therefore silent.

But the direct question He will not fail to answer. "Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?" must be answered with no ambiguity at all. It will give them what they seek against Him; but it will give rest also to those that are true enquirers, and minister through the ages to the blessing of man. Yes, He is the Son of the Blessed, while He is the Son of man as well; and they shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.

[2] The denial of the disciple follows the confession of the Master. It speaks

one of the maidservants of the high priest; and seeing Peter warming himself, she looked on him and saith, Thou also wast with the Nazarene, Jesus. But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the outer court; and a cock crew. And the maid seeing him began again to say to those standing by, This is one of them. But he again denied it. And after a little while those that stood by said unto Peter again, Truly thou art one of them; for thou also art a Galilean. And he began to [v]curse and to swear, I know not this man of whom ye speak. And immediately, a second time, the cock crew. And Peter remembered the saying, how Jesus said unto him, [w]Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

v *cf.* 1 Sa. 21. 13. *cf.* Matt. 2. 8. *cf.* ver. 45.

w vers. 29-31.

2 (xv. 1-15): The feigned charge.

2. [1] And [x]immediately in the morning, the chief priests took counsel together with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate. And Pilate [y]asked him, Art *thou* the king of the Jews? And he answered and said unto him, Thou sayest [it]. And the chief priests accused him of many things. And Pilate again asked him, saying, Answerest thou nothing? Behold how many things they accuse thee of. But Jesus still [z]answered nothing; insomuch that Pilate marvelled.

1 (1-5): the confession.

x Matt. 27. 1, etc. Lk. 23. 1, etc. Jno. 18. 28, etc.

y Matt. 27. 11. Lk. 23. 3. Jno. 18. 33.

z *cf.* ch. 14. 60, 61.

2 (6-15): Jesus or Barabbas.

[2] Now at the feast he [a]used to release unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they asked. Now there was one called Barabbas, bound with them that had made insurrection, men who had committed [b]murder in the insurrection. And the multitude crying out began to ask him [to do] as he was wont to do unto them. And

a Matt. 27. 15-26. Lk. 23. 17-25. Jno. 18. 39, 40.

b Acts 3. 14. *cf.* Gen. 4. 8 with Jude 11.

for itself, and needs here little comment. Each evangelist gives it: for there is need of such a lesson being well learned, as that honesty of heart, and true love to Christ, and zeal for Him, cannot save us from the most terrible falls, without that distrust of ourselves which brings in the power of God for us. Not only the *sinner* needs to be broken down before God, but the *saint* does. Human strength avails nothing on the path he is called to tread.

Mark alone notices the twofold crowing of the cock, the latter being at the general cock-crowing of which the other Gospels speak. The first fails to arouse Peter; so easily may the conscience become torpid through the power of sin. Only Luke notices the tender reproof of the Lord's look, which followed the second: in fact those eyes had never been withdrawn from him; though the "look" was more than this: it was the divine recall of the wanderer to himself and to God.

2. [1] In the second part here, we have still a confession and a denial, though the latter of a very different kind to what we have just seen. The chief priests still charge Him with being what He truly is, although as a charge they make it falsely. He *is* the King of the Jews. To their further accusations He answers nothing, so that Pilate marvels: but He has no thought of saving Himself from what was before Him; had He purpose of this kind, He would have stood in no such fashion before His accusers. Mark almost leaves out Pilate: from his point of view he is but a mere circumstance.

[2] It is otherwise as to Barabbas, whose crimes are told out, as they are not in

Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the king of the Jews? For he knew that for [c]envy the chief priests had delivered him up. But the chief priests stirred up the multitude that he should rather release Barabbas unto them. And Pilate answering said to them again, What will ye then that I do [unto him] whom ye call the king of the Jews? And they cried out again, [d]Crucify him. And Pilate said unto them, Why, [e]what evil hath he done? But they cried out exceedingly, Crucify him. And Pilate, willing to content the multitude, [f]released Barabbas unto them, and delivered up Jesus, when he had [g]scourged him, to be crucified.

c *cf.* Matt. 21. 38. *cf.* Jno. 12. 19.

d Matt. 26.2 with Jno. 12. 32, 33. *cf.* Acts 13. 27-29. *cf.* Gal. 3.13.

e *cf.* Jno. 19. 4. *cf.* Jno. 8.46.

f ver. 6. *cf.* Is. 61. 1.

g *cf.* Is. 50.6.

SECTION 3. (Chap. xv. 16–47.)

The Cup drunk.

1 (xv.16-20): Crowned with the curse.

1. Now the soldiers led him away into the court which is the prætorium, and they call together the whole band. And they clothe him with [h]purple, and put on him a [i]crown of thorns which they had plaited. And they began to salute him, Hail, king of the Jews! And they [j]struck his head with a reed, and spat upon him, and bowing their knees worshiped him. And when

h *cf.* Ex. 26. 31 with ver. 26.

i *cf.* Is. 55.13. *cf.* Is. 53. 5. *ctr.* Heb. 2. 9.

j *cf.* Ps. 69.3. *cf.* Ps. 109. 4, 5.

Matthew. He is seen as a chief of sinners, a rebel and a murderer, for whom the feast of redemption offers a possibility of release, but only, according to Pilate's alternative, if Jesus is given up. Jesus becomes, as it were, the Substitute for the chief of sinners. To "release Barabbas" is "to destroy Jesus." Why? because He has done evil? the judge asks in vain, Where is it? Looking deeper than at the wicked wills of men, we may discern in the purpose of God that holy Sin-offering, the true passover, by which even a Barabbas may be delivered, not for good in him, for Barabbas shows none. Thus the gospel story is more completely unfolded. Barabbas is released: Jesus is given up.

Sec. 3.

1. Now we approach the drinking of the cup. He is crowned with thorns, the sign of the curse, as in Matthew, clothed with the purple, but without the reed-sceptre: that only smites Him. And it is indeed, but a reed that smites the Rock; yet presently, through the marvelous working of God, the waters will flow out; and the waters will become a great river, going forth on all sides to gladden the earth.

Notice that the robe is *purple** here, not *scarlet*, as in Matthew. The blood-color is here, but mingled: as we have seen, even the precious blood of atonement, that it might sanctify the people, must be that of a sacrifice offered outside the camp (Heb. xiii. 11, 12). And "so Jesus, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate." Here is the true sin-offering, and here is the purple, the composite color,—the blood, the death-penalty taken; but with that, the heavenly side also, that is, the blue. For

* "A scarlet military mantle," says Lange, "was made to represent the imperial purple: hence the designation, *a purple* (πορφυραν) a purple robe, as Mark and John describe it. And because this is the symbolic import of the robe, there is no discrepancy. The scarlet military robe no more required to be a real purple than the crown of thorns required to be a real crown, or the reed a real sceptre; for the whole transaction was an ironical drama, and such an one, too, that the infamous abuse might be readily perceived through the pretended glorification. The staff must be a reed, the symbol of impotence; the crown must injure and pierce the brow; and so too must the purple present the symbol of miserable, pretended greatness; and this was done by its being an old camp-mantle."

But how, through all this, God was working, to turn all to the bringing out His glory as infinitely higher than that of earthly potentates, we may surely see clearly.

they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him; and they lead him out to crucify him.

2 (21-32): Crucified.

2. And they [k]impress a certain man passing by, Simon, a Cyrenian, coming from the field, the father of Alexander and Rufus, that he might bear his cross. And they bring him to the place [l]Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, the place of a skull. And they offered him [m]wine mingled with myrrh, but he received it not. And they crucify him, and [n]part his garments among them, casting lots on them what each should take. And it was the [o]third hour, and they crucified him. And the [p]superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

And with him they crucify [q]two robbers; one on his right hand, and one on his left. [And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, [r]And he was reckoned with transgressors].* And they that passed by [s]railed upon him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ha! thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross. In like manner the [t]chief priests also, with the scribes, mocking among themselves, said, He [u]saved others; himself he cannot save. Let the Christ, the king of Israel, now come down from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified [v]with him reproached him.

k Matt. 27. 32. Lk. 23. 26. *cf.* Jno. 19. 17. *cf.* Phil. 3. 10.
l Matt. 27. 33. Lk. 23. 33. Jno. 19. 17. *cf.* Heb. 13. 11-13.
m Matt. 27. 34. *cf.* Ps. 69. 21. Lk. 23. 36. *cf.* Jno. 19. 28-30.
n Matt. 27. 35. Lk. 23. 34. Jno. 19. 23, 24. Ps. 22. 18. *cf.* Phil. 3. 9.
o *cf.* Matt. 27. 45. *cf.* Lk. 23. 44. *cf.* Jno. 19. 14.
p Matt. 27. 37. Lk 23. 38. Jno. 19. 19-22. *cf.* Gen. 22. 13 with Ps. 132. 17.
q Matt. 27. 38. Lk. 23. 32, 33. Jno. 19. 18. *cf.* Is. 53. 9.

* Perhaps to be omitted.

r Is. 53. 12; Lk. 22. 37. s Ps. 22. 7; Ps. 69. 12; Matt. 27. 39, 40. t Matt. 27. 41-44; Lk. 23. 35; *ctr.* Heb. 4. 15. u. *cf.* Jno. 3. 14, 15 with Heb. 9. 22. v *cf.* Lk. 23. 39-43 with 1 Tim. 1. 13.

that was heaven's side, the consequence of sin laid upon Him, the hiding of the face of God from Him,—for *us* heaven opened.

These are both *royal* colors also, as we plainly see; the scarlet of Matthew and the purple of Mark, just as the crown of thorns, the crown of curse, for Him was really a crown. The Sufferer reigns as that, in the Kingdom peculiarly His; and so only could He have, among the sinners of man's race, such a throne as could satisfy Him.

2. The impressment of Simon the Cyrenian upon the road, to bear His cross, is recorded here, as in Matthew; but with an addition here which shows Simon, the "hearkener" and cross bearer, as the father of Alexander and Rufus, God's grace being fruitful in him. Is not this the true way of fruitfulness ever, to hearken and bear the cross?

Golgotha, the place of a skull, is reached, and then the vinegar and gall are offered Him, only to be rejected: Mark gives "wine mingled with myrrh;" the former, the sour wine of common use, much like vinegar; the latter is probably a different thing from "gall," which would hardly seem a fitting term to describe it. The parting of His garments, according to the view that has been given of it,* is as naturally found in all the Gospels as the particularization as to it suits and is found in John. The mockery of the bystanders, and especially of the heads of the people is given almost exactly as in Matthew.

3. And now from the sixth to the ninth hour, there falls a darkness over all the land. We have already considered its meaning generally, but every partic-

* See Notes on Matthew.

3 (33-38): The opening of the sanctuary.

3. And when the sixth hour was come, there was [w] darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus [z] cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias. And one ran and, filling a sponge with [y] vinegar, put it upon a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let be; let us see whether Elias cometh to take him down. And Jesus, having uttered a [z] loud cry, expired. And the [a] veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

4 (39-41): Impending changes.

4. And when the [b] centurion who stood by over against him, saw that he so cried out and expired, he said, Truly this man was Son of God.

w Matt. 27. 45. Lk. 23. 44, 45. *cf.* 1 Jno. 1. 5 with 2 Cor. 5. 21.
x Matt. 27. 46–49. Ps. 22. 1. *cf.* Is. 53. 5, 6.
y *cf.* ver. 23.
z Matt. 27. 50. Lk. 23. 46. *cf.* Jno. 10. 17, 18.
a Matt. 27. 51. Lk. 23. 45. *cf.* Heb. 10. 19, 20.
b Matt. 27. 54. Lk. 23. 47; *cf.* Deut. 32. 31.

ular specified has surely its importance. The *three* hours, as such, speak naturally of the manifestation of what is hidden, and may most simply speak of the opening of the sanctuary, which takes place at its close. It is the blood of the sin-offering which on the day of atonement in Israel opened it for the moment to let in the high priest, the representative of the people. But that was but for a moment: the characteristic of the legal dispensation was in the veil which hung continuously before the presence of God, so that from man's point of view He dwelt in the thick darkness. It was a darkness forbidding man's approach, and speaking of sin unmet, spite of the hecatombs of victims dying for it. And the true Sacrifice having now come, He must find His way through the darkness, laden with the sin which had forced God thus into distance from the creature of His love.

The three hours of darkness were to Him the measure of what to any other would have been an infinite hopeless distance. The cry of desertion interpreted the darkness. The veil rent from top to bottom proclaimed that it was traversed and removed. The *sixth* hour speaks of the barrier-limit reached; the *ninth*, of perfected manifestation.

The agonizing question shows the nature of the darkness, which is not outward but within upon His soul. The quotation from the twenty-second psalm gives us the clue to find the answer which the psalm gives to the question. If a holy God is to abide among the praises of a people taken from among sinful men, He under the weight of that sin must declare that holiness in God's judgment of it. God is glorified in this redemption-work beyond the possibility of all man's sin to cloud again for ever. The light bursts forth now, and as never yet. God is *in* the light. The separating veil is rent from top to bottom.

To the mockers around the cross, the darkness is as dense as ever. They exclaim that He is calling for Elias. And while one brings to Him upon a reed the vinegar for His thirst, he joins in the cry they raise, to wait and see if Elias will come to take Him down. But Jesus cries again with a loud voice, and expires.

Through all this account we have already seen how, by the omission of particulars recorded by Matthew, Mark emphasizes the sin-offering character of Christ's sacrifice.* But there are positive testimonies, also, that we have noted. And now, as we go on to the after events of the book, we shall find the same character attaching to it, until we see the glorious Risen Man seated in heaven at the right hand of God. The veil is passed, but never closed again: He is gone in, our Fore-runner, and we walk in the light as God is in the light.

4. Before we have left the Cross and its glory of sorrow, intimation is given of victories which it is to achieve, and changes resultant. The first voice, save

*See Introduction, pp. 26-28.

And there were [c]women also looking on from afar; among whom were both Mary of Magdala, and Mary the mother of James the younger, and of Joses, and Salome: who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him; and many other women who came up with him unto Jerusalem.

c Matt. 27. 55, 56. Lk. 23. 27-31, 49. Jno. 19. 25. *cf.* ch. 16. 1.

5 (42-47): Governmental working of God.

5. And when even was now come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, there came [d]Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable councilor, who himself also awaited the kingdom of God; and he went in boldly unto Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. And Pilate wondered whether he were already dead; and calling the centurion, he inquired of him if he had been any while dead. And when he had learned it of the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph. And having bought a linen cloth, he took him down, and swathed him in the linen cloth, and laid him in a [e]sepulcre which had been hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a stone against the door of the sepulcre. And Mary of Magdala and Mary the [mother] of Joses beheld where he was laid.

d Matt. 27. 57-61. Lk. 23. 50-56. Jno. 19.38-42. *cf.* Matt.20. 6, 9.

e *cf.* Is. 53.9. *cf.* Josh.3.4.

that of the dying robber, which, in the midst of Jewish blasphemy and dishonor, owns the supreme glory of the Son of God, is that of the Gentile centurion. Christ already has His own among the uncircumcised, the beginning of the great host that are soon to follow Him.

Then this company of ministering women gathered by His cross, and to be the first heralds of His victory over death, is not without significance. "The Lord gave the word; great was the company of the women that published it" (Ps. lxviii. 11). The victory is so achieved, that not the men of might are needed, but the feebleness of women was abundantly enough. Indeed the men of might, the fighters on the Lord's behalf, had not found their hands. But now the battle was over: He had fought alone, and of the people there were none with Him: with the last great shout of the battle-field, the cry of victory and not of exhaustion, He had entered into His rest. The women are now free to minister. The shadow of the Cross is but the shadow of the sheltering wings of divine love.

It is this victory-shout which, according to Mark, impresses the soldier: "when the centurion saw that He so cried out and expired, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God." He had seen death upon the battlefield, perhaps in many a shape, but never a death like this. If we take John's account, it is the cry that has rung through so many hearts since then, *Tetelestai*, "It is finished." If it be not the great cry itself, it certainly went with it; and how has that become for Gentile faith the gospel-utterance! It has assured of peace made with God, stilled to rest the tumult of other things, and subdued the heart to Jesus, to the Son of God who loved and gave Himself for the sons of men.

5. "They assigned Him His grave with wicked men; but with the rich man when He had died." So had Isaiah long before predicted, and now we have the fulfilment of it. The malefactor's grave which would have naturally followed the death of the cross could not be permitted Him. That substitutionary work was accomplished which alone had made Him to be numbered with transgressors. In that character He could appear no more; and the righteousness of God, which He had declared in His death, claimed now divine intervention in His behalf. While He yet slept He must sleep in honor, and as it has been well said, the One born of a Virgin-womb could only be fittingly honored in a

SUBDIVISION 3.

Resurrection, and Heaven really opened.

1 (1-8): Promise, yet barren.

1. AND when the [f]sabbath was now past, Mary of Magdala, and Mary the [mother] of James, and Salome, bought spices that they might come and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, they come to the sepulcre when the sun was risen. And they said one to another, [g]Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulcre? And looking up, they see that the stone is rolled away: for it was exceeding great. And entering into the sepulcre, they saw a [h]young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a white robe: and they were astounded. And he saith unto them, Be not astounded; ye seek Jesus, the Nazarene, the crucified. He is [i]risen, he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. But go, tell

[f] Matt. 28.1, etc. Lk.24.1,etc. Jno. 20. 1, etc.

[g] Matt.28.2. *cf.*Ex.14.13 -16.

[h] Lk. 24. 4. *cf.* Jno. 20. 12, 13. *cf.* Acts 1. 10, 11. *cf.*1 Tim.3. 16.

[i] Matt. 28.6. Lk. 24. 5-7. 1 Cor. 15.3-8.

virgin-tomb. He who could not see corruption, could not lie in a tomb which corruption had defiled. Thus all was in harmony, and God silently controlling all things before visible intervention could take place. Joseph of Arimathea, inspired with a boldness he had not yet shown, goes in to Pilate and asks of him the body of Jesus. Pilate, finding from the centurion that He is indeed already dead, commands it to be given; and in the new tomb, awaiting its predicted resurrection on the third day, that sacred body rests.

SUBD. 3.

As every one knows, doubt has been cast upon the authenticity of the last twelve verses of this Gospel; and if they are, as Meyer calls them, but an "apocryphal fragment," a waif without parentage known, introduced into Mark we know not how, to mend the ragged end of his mutilated or unfinished work, doubt would naturally be cast on more than its authenticity, and most of all for those who are slow to believe in inspiration moving after this fashion. We need not, however, discuss it here, as the authority for the full text is abundant in both MSS. and Versions. The spiritual relationship of the closing verses to the Gospel as a whole is perfect; and this, if proved, is a better argument of itself in favor of authenticity than all besides that has ever been produced against it.

Moreover there is reason of an internal kind for the difference that in fact exists between the two parts of this last chapter,—the first, which gives the promise from the (unseen) Lord to meet His disciples in Galilee: a promise of which Mark gives no fulfilment: while the second briefly relates His actual appearances in and around Jerusalem, and His sending them forth with signs attesting their commission to preach the gospel in all the world. These two parts we have now to consider in their scope and connection with one another.

1. In the first part we have then promise which, *as far as Mark's account of it goes*, is not fulfilled. Jesus does not meet them in Galilee; and the end for them, the account closing abruptly, is in fear and trembling, rather than the joy and gladness we should have expected from it.

If, then, nothing is without a purpose here (and we at least are not going to question this), there must be for us some meaning in this non-fulfilment, this fear instead of joy. If we think, also, of the disciples as what they were undoubtedly till after (and a good while after) the resurrection,—a Jewish remnant, with hopes still clustering round the Old Testament promises, we can see something very like what Mark pictures here. Christ is come, Christ is risen; there is a promise for believing Israelites which to them as such is not fulfilled; and in short their history, and that of the ministry to the circumcision, with which especially is connected Peter's name (ver. 7, Gal. ii. 7, 9), is just such a

his disciples and [j] Peter, [that] he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. And they went out and fled from the sepulcre; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them. And they said nothing to any one, for they were [k] afraid.

2 (9-18): The witness of salvation.

2. Now when he was risen early on the first day of the week, he appeared [l] first to Mary of Magdala, out of whom he had cast seven demons. She went and told those that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they heard that he was alive and had been seen of her, [m] disbelieved.

And after these things he was [n] manifested in another form to two of them, as they walked on their way into the country. And they went and told it to the rest; neither believed they them.

j cf. ch. 14. 71. cf. Lk. 24. 47.

k cf. Matt. 28. 5. cf. Lk. 24. 36–40.

l Jno. 20. 11–18. cf. Lk. 7. 42, 43. cf. 1 Cor. 15. 8, 9.

m. Lk. 24. 10, 11.

n. Lk. 24. 13–35.

broken fragment as is here presented to us. It will be completed, but only in another dispensation, after the parenthesis of the Church's history shall be over, and the "remnant of" the King's "brethren shall return to the children of Israel" (Mic. v. 3): that is, when Israelites converted to God shall again be partakers in the hopes and promises of the nation.

This, I doubt not, is what is intimated in the first verses of Mark's closing chapter. We shall find similar things in the close of John's Gospel, and more fully brought out there: things hard to be uttered, indeed, when the meaning, even of divine history, is so generally considered to be merely in the letter, and when belief in the inspiration of God's word—in any proper sense of inspiration—is being so largely given up. That cannot affect the truth itself, nor its importance for those that have ears to hear.

2. The second part begins once more with the resurrection, and is of another character. Here the Lord Himself appears, and first to one who had been delivered from the power of Satan, which had completely possessed her. This supremacy of power over the whole array of the enemy—seven demons—characterizes the full salvation which is now to be proclaimed. The message given her we find only in John; here only that at first it was disbelieved. The very men who are to be the heralds of it in the world are at first incredulous as to what they long to receive. As Luke says of what took place afterwards, "they believed not for joy": it was, according to the common phrase, "too good to be true."

The appearance to the two on the road to Emmaus, next referred to, is still incompetent to bring conviction; and the Lord then Himself appears to the eleven—the company now spoken of as that number, though Thomas, as we know, was not among them at the first,—and upbraids them with their unbelief and hardness of heart.

The commission that follows is entirely different from that in Matthew, though some have represented it as but another version of it. They were given at different times and places clearly; while they reflect each the character of its respective Gospel. Matthew, whose subject is the Kingdom, gives the mode of reception into it by baptism and teaching. This supposes Mark's commission as being already acted on,—the "what shall we do?" of those already wrought upon by the good news proclaimed. Mark's view of the sin-offering is the basis of the gospel: this blessed work accomplished, the going forth of the good news naturally results.

Faith, therefore, which is implied in the commission in Matthew, is insisted on here: "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." On the other hand, "he that disbelieveth"—no baptism affecting the case of such an one—"shall be condemned."

And [o]afterwards he was manifested unto the eleven themselves, as they were at table, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not those who had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, [p]Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation: he that [q]believeth and is [r]baptized shall be saved; and he that disbelieveth shall be condemned. And these [s]signs shall follow them that believe: in my name they shall cast out [t]demons; they shall speak with new [u]tongues; they shall take up [v]serpents; and if they [w]drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them at all; they shall lay hands on the [x]sick, and they shall recover.

o Lk. 24.36-45. Jno. 20 19, 20.
p Matt. 28. 18-20. *cf.* Lk. 24.46-49. *cf.* Jno. 20. 21-23.
q *cf.* Acts 13. 38, 39.
r *cf.* Acts 16. 30-34.
s *cf.* Acts 4. 29-31. *cf.* Acts. 5. 12.
t *cf.* Acts 16. 18.
u *cf.* Acts 2. 4, etc. v *cf.* Acts 28. 3-6. w *cf.* 2 Ki. 4. 39-41. x *cf.* Acts 9. 32-35.

The signs that follow those who believe introduce us into a region of controversy in different quarters. It is plain, however, that even in the apostles' days they were not signs which necessarily followed in every individual. "Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues?" implies the negative. But the apostle asks moreover, "Are all workers of miracles?"—any kind of miracles?—and this must have a similar answer (1 Cor. xii. 29, 30).

Here then is what at once destroys any argument founded upon the universality of such gifts as these. It could not be said of any Christians that as such they would have them. The question was a much simpler one,—a question of fact: who have them? who have them not? If no one in a generation had them, we could not say they ought to have had, according to the Lord's words. As "signs," the apostle's words as to one of them might apply to others, or to all, "wherefore tongues are for a *sign*, not to those that believe, but to those that believe not" (1 Cor. xiv. 22); and if unbelievers ceased, we might even *expect* that these would cease.

But miracles do not produce faith; though they may produce conviction. Those who "believed in His Name when they saw the miracles that He did," He "did not commit Himself to, because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for He knew what was in man" (John ii. 23-25). It was but an intellectual conviction, quite possible to men without divine work at all; so that if this were accomplished—if only the gospel were going out amidst a people who accepted Christianity as true—one still would not expect these signs to follow.

Thus we are brought very near to the actual condition of things that obtains in Christendom to-day. Nor do the Lord's words make that condition a hard matter to reconcile with them. The signs *did* follow, and fulfilled the object for which they were designed. As Christianity became known, and the truth came to get hearing, the miraculous accompaniments ceased, after the manner of all such whenever their purpose was fulfilled. Miracles have always been temporary, gathering around certain crises in the divine history of mankind, times of special divine intervention, and then passing away; and Christianity is no exception to the rule. As to power for conviction, where the word of God is once fairly before men, the Lord Himself has assured us that, if they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

That which comes first among these signs has special significance. Satan had possessed himself of the world largely by means of the religions of men, the perversions of that original worship which through successive generations became ever more corrupt. "The things which the Gentiles sacrifice," says the apostle; "they sacrifice to demons, and not to God" (1 Cor. x. 20). And as in Egypt, when God brought out His people, the delivering judgments fell upon their gods, so now in Christianity. "They shall cast out demons in My Name"

3 (19, 20): The return to God.

3. The Lord, therefore, after he had spoken unto them, was [y]taken up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord [z]working with them and confirming the word with signs following.

[y] Lk. 24.50-53. *cf.* Eph. 4.8-10.
[z] *cf.* Acts 3. 13 with Heb. 2. 4. *cf.* 2 Tim. 4. 16. 17.

is the proclamation of Christ's supremacy over the religious rulers of the heathen world.

The gift of new tongues was grace surmounting the judgment of Babel, while yet the primitive "one speech and one language" could not be restored.

The taking up of serpents and the innocuousness of any deadly draught would fence round life from the insidious attack of the destroyer; while the miraculous healings were a manifestation of power over the power of death in others. All together testified to the Lord's victory over Satan, over death, and over sin: for sin was that which gave power to both death and Satan. Nothing could affect these which had not gone to the bottom of the question of sin.

Thus, then, were the messengers of salvation equipped for their work.

3. And now, His end achieved, the shadow taken from the face of God, the sanctuary opened to all seekers of Him, the Servant-Son returns up where He was before. But He returns not *as* He was before. He returns with the humanity that He has taken: sure pledge that though He has changed the sphere of His service, the service itself He has not given up. He takes humanity itself up to the throne of God, and sits down there with it at the right hand of God.

He has been in the lowest place: He receives the highest. It is the same Gospel which fitly shows Him to us in both. The blood of the sin-offering opens the sanctuary; but more, He who has shed it has entered heaven in the power of it; has entered it a Man, and with this link of Manhood connecting Him thus with others who are men, and for whom He offered Himself.

The consequences of this are not pursued in this Gospel. They must be sought in after-communications of divine grace, which has traced for us His path step by step from lowest humiliation to glory, and how we are concerned in every step. The place at the right hand of God is, of course, peculiar to Himself; but not only does His heart still abide with His people here, but His hand also works for them and with them; and thus Mark presents Him at the close as One whose love makes Him still the Servant of man's need. For "they went forth, and preached everywhere, the *Lord working with them*, and confirming the word with signs following."

SCOPE AND DIVISIONS OF LUKE.

LUKE'S Gospel gives us "the face of a Man," which naturally connects, therefore, with the numerical place of the Gospel, the number of "manifestation." In no other of the Synoptics are we brought so near God, or is God so unveiled to us, as witness the fifteenth chapter. This connects necessarily with the peace-offering character of Christ's work, the fruit of atonement as seen in the previous Gospels. The shadow is gone from off the face of God.

The "face of a man" goes beyond this, however: for manhood is that which the Son of God has assumed to Himself, not simply to accomplish our redemption, but as for ever the Head of humanity in new creation. All the blessed results are indeed not yet unfolded; but the Person is here who owns and acts towards His people in all the human sympathy and affection of such relationship. His manhood is emphasized in all the reality of weakness and dependence, His birth and childhood, growing in wisdom as in stature, frequent in prayer; amid all, perfect in obedience, a unique spectacle on earth, so that God's "good pleasure in men," of which the angels unjealously speak, is justified and necessitated. Here God and man meet; with blessing for man which fills heart and life with answering praise.

Even from the Cross, as we contemplate it here, the supreme agony is departed. There is no cry of abandonment; "My God!" is exchanged for "Father." He prays for His murderers; He gives peace to the dying sinner at His side. Salvation is an accomplished thing throughout the book; grace, peace, remission of sins, are proclaimed everywhere in it.

There are three divisions only:—

1. (Chaps. i.–iv. 13): The unique obedient Man.
2. (Chaps. iv. 14–xviii. 34): A Saviour and His salvation.
3. (Chaps. xviii. 35–xxiv.): Restoration, its hindrances and accomplishment, and the peace-offering work by which man is brought nigh.

NOTES.

Div. 1.

THE Person of the Lord is that which is set before us in the first division: the truth, but also the uniqueness of His manhood, born of a virgin mother by the power of the Spirit of God; unique also in the perfection of that obedience, "tempted in all things as we are, apart from sin." It is evident that this is put before us—the reality of what He is—as neither of the previous Gospels develops it. Matthew dwells rather upon His dignity as the Ruler of the people of God. Mark declares Him to be the Son of God, but passes on then immediately to His service, speaking neither of His birth nor human parentage save incidentally at an after-time. John dwells upon His deity, the Word made flesh, the *Only*-begotten of the Father, where He has no brethren. All in it speaks of contrast rather than human kinship, though Man He truly is. But Luke presents the *First*-born, which of necessity implies brethren,—the One born of the Spirit, as we are *new*-born of the Spirit: an immense difference, surely, but which yet gives the connection declared by the apostle (Heb. ii. 11), that "both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause," he adds, "He is not ashamed to call them 'brethren.'"

The link is not between the Lord as Man and men in general. It was not true as some say, that in becoming Man He became flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone. It is we, His people, who are flesh of *His* flesh and bone of *His* bone (Eph. v. 30). For this also death had to come in: for "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone" (John xii. 24); and it was in the deep sleep fallen upon Adam, the image of such death-sleep, that Eve was taken out of his side (Gen. ii. 21–23).

Thus it is the Sanctifier and the sanctified that are all of one; and yet here also, as already said, there is a difference that is of immense importance. Truly Man as Christ was, and even the Son of man, the power of the Spirit preserved that pure humanity which He took in the virgin's womb from the slightest taint or consequence of evil. Naturally, He was only "that Holy Thing," a "Second Man," unfallen; and more, by virtue of His divine nature, never separable from His humanity, "of heaven" (1 Cor. xv. 47)—a heavenly Man.

We must remember, however, that for the doctrine of all this we must go beyond Luke, and indeed, gather from Scripture generally. As we do so, the gospel of the Manhood will more and more reveal to us the Person about whom these texts and truths gather in a constantly increasing radiance of glory. For Scripture has its central theme in Him, even as "all things were created by Him and for Him." His word is as His work, in all parts testifying to Himself.

Luke shows us the perfect Man, welcoming the searching eyes of a hostile world to prove Him; challenging those who gladly would, to find Him aught but the unblemished One; while God commits Himself to Him absolutely as the One in whom He has found His perfect satisfaction and delight. Yet He is not only in the flesh, but "in the *likeness* of *sinful* flesh" (Rom. viii. 3). He is in wilderness circumstances, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" never sheltering Himself, by the power of the divinity that was in Him, from the common lot of men; never pleading the exemption due to His perfection, from any trial known to man: nay, upon a path which led ever downwards to the lowest humiliation, to death and the place of the Cross. All this was made the means of the fullest possible display of an obedience to God which had no limit, —of a love which Godward was the spring of such obedience, to men an unreserved devotedness· "the good Shepherd," laying down His life for the sheep.

These sheep are wanderers, and He must seek them, if they are to be His own. They must be won out of the ways of sin, made to know His voice, the work of His love done in them. Thus He is the Sanctifier; thus they are sanctified. And this work is shown in Luke as in neither of the former Gospels, though it could not, of course, be omitted in any. But with "Luke, the be-

LUKE.

DIVISION 1. (Chaps. i.–iv. 13.)

The Unique Obedient Man.

SUBDIVISION 1. (Chap. i.)

Divine promise fulfilling in sovereign grace.

1 (1–4): The purpose: certainty by sufficient knowledge.

1. FORASMUCH as [a]many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning the things fulfilled among us, as they [b]handed them down to us who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having traced all things accurately from the first, to write

[a] Matt. 1. 1. Mk. 1. 1. Jno. 1. 1. *cf.* Acts 1. 1.
[b] Heb. 2. 3, 4. *cf.* 1 Jno. 1. 1. *cf.* Acts 1. 21, 22.

loved physician," the remedy for the sin-sick souls must needs have a great place; and so will any acquaintance with the blessed book before us realize it to have in it abundantly the revelation of God's method with all spiritual diseases: the voice of recall and recovery to God sounds everywhere through it.

SUBD. 1.

In the first subdivision we find the events immediately preceding and in relation with the birth of Christ. In them, in the midst of the ruin in which Israel is found (and Israel is but what man is: there is no exceptional betterness that can be claimed for any), God is seen working in pursuance of long-declared purposes, and in sovereign grace. The names of two of those who come before us in the first place in this account are highly significant in this respect. The first is Zacharias, "Jah has remembered"; his wife's name is Elisabeth, the same as Elisheba, "God has sworn." And in his song of praise Zacharias puts these things together. "Blessed be the Lord"—or Jehovah (of which Jah is a contracted form)—"for He has wrought redemption . . . to *remember* His holy covenant: the *oath* that He *sware* to our father Abraham." Thus is He declared, then, to be acting here.

Thus the spring of all blessing is in God Himself, who from the beginning has pledged Himself in His grace to men, that they might know and so have confidence in it. Thus the New Testament begins for us, with its roots in the Old, new indeed in the fulness of its blessing. He comes who is to bring in the blessing, into whose hands all that concerns human interests and the glory of God can be entrusted without fear. Yet it is Man that is to undertake for man: the Seed of the woman is to bruise the serpent's head; Man is to glorify God where man has dishonored Him; and goodness is to triumph, not by other might but by its own.

1. The introduction to the Gospel is remarkable as showing the unity of thought that runs through the book, even in parts where naturally we should not expect it. Luke's is the Gospel of the Manhood; and "the face of a man" greets us in the opening lines. The human purpose is accomplished in a thoroughly human way, and without the claim of anything more than human. Others have taken in hand to put forth narratives of the events which have been fulfilled among men of late, and which have been handed down to them by eye-witnesses who were also specially accredited as ministers of the Word. The attempts themselves show the desirability of giving permanent form to what as tradition was liable so soon to change and to perversion. The writer had given special attention to this subject, and had traced out all things accurately from the first. He writes therefore to his brother-Christian Theophilus, that he might have certainty about the things in which as a Christian he had been instructed.

unto thee in order, most noble Theophilus, that thou mightest [c]know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.

[c] *cf.* Jno. 20. 29-31. *cf.* 2 Pet. 1. 16.

He claims no commission from the Lord to write his Gospel. He sees a want existing which he is competent to supply, and he supplies it. He does not even speak or think apparently of writing for the Church as a whole, or what would meet the general need. It is for Theophilus. He says nothing of inspiration. Divine love in him sets him to do what he can to establish in the faith one in whom he is interested; and in result he has written what the whole Church has owned to be of God for all.

It is a beautiful example of how naturally the Spirit of God works, or may work, in what we term inspiration. The instrument He uses is not like a mere pen in the hand of another. He is a man acting freely—for "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty"—as if from his own heart and mind alone. He uses all the means he has got, and uses them diligently. You are quite prepared to find in his work the character of the writer: why should not He who has prepared the instrument, use it according to the quality of that which He has prepared? Why should He set aside the mind which He has furnished, any more than the affections of the heart which He has endowed? Why, too, should He who fed the multitudes from the loaves and fishes already provided, set aside what the zeal and diligence of the disciple had "accurately traced out"? It was that before-made provision which the Lord blessed and which common men after their own fashion distributed; and who shall tell us *just what* it was, wondrous as was the change, that the blessing of the Lord had added to it?

The Author of nature is not jealous of nature: He is Lord of it. Amid laws that He has imposed on it, He moves freely, working His own will, so that we are apt to ask, Where is He? when we should ask, Where is He *not*? And, even when the greatness of the work accomplished demonstrates that here is the Almighty Worker, we look at the ease and simplicity of the accomplishment, and wonder how can it be He?

This is the lesson of Luke's introduction; so suited as an introduction to the One who comes to us with the face of a Man, and speaks to us with a human tongue. As is He, so is His word: in which also the human element misread has been made to banish or diminish the divine; to put God into the distance, instead of bringing Him completely nigh.

Luke says nothing explicitly of inspiration; but he knows the power of what he has to communicate to give *certainty* as to the Christian verities: a certainty which clearly neither tradition for more than a first generation or so could give, nor an inaccurate, however well-intentioned, account of them. This is the ground of his own writing: he has traced out "accurately" all things from the first. How short a time it was that this tradition had existed! Luke was himself the companion of Paul the apostle; yet already it was needful to take measures for giving a settled form to it, and trace out things accurately. We can see that he has not claimed as much as he has really done: for he has given us one part of a fourfold history of Christ, furnishing together what we need to know of Him in all His various value for the soul. He has pictured for us among these the *Man*, Christ Jesus, distinct from all other views, yet absolutely accordant; pursuing the line of truth entrusted to him with a simplicity of purpose which moulds every part of his Gospel; while the fulness of divine grace in it speaks and will ever speak as from the full heart of God to men.

One thing we must add to this, which naturally connects with it, that we have in Luke the first and only Gentile writer, that we are aware of, in the Bible; and that he writes to Theophilus, evidently another Gentile; by the title of "most noble" applied to him, as to Festus by the apostle (Acts xxvi. 25), still or recently in some similar position of honor. Thus the gospel was going out among the heathen while Israel had turned the back upon it. Here was grace indeed in its fullest expression; and it is characteristic of what is presented to us here.

2 (5-25): The angel's message: the Saviour's herald.

1 (5-7): righteous but barren.

2. [1] There was in the days of [d]Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the [e]course of Abia; and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both [f]righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because Elisabeth was [g]barren, and they were both advanced in years.

2 (8-11): the angel's visit.

[2] And it came to pass, as he fulfilled his priestly service before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priesthood his lot was to enter into the temple of the Lord and burn [h]incense. And all the multitude of people were praying [i]without at the hour of incense. And there appeared unto him an [j]angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.

3 (12-17): fulfillment of prayer: John filled with the Holy Spirit.

[3] And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and [k]fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy [l]prayer is heard, and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his

d Matt. 2. 1.
e 1 Chron. 24. 10.
f *cf.* Gen. 7. 1. *cf.* Ps. 32. 11. *cf.* Ps. 15.
g *cf.* Gen. 16. 1. *cf.* Gen. 25. 21. *cf.* Gen. 29. 31. *cf.* 1 Sam. 1. 2, 5.
h 1 Chron. 24. 19. *cf.* Ex. 30. 1-10.
i *cf.* Lev. 9. 23. *cf.* Num. 6. 22-27.
j *cf.* Matt. 1. 20. *cf.* Matt. 2. 13, 19. *cf.* vers. 26, etc. *cf.* ch. 2. 9, 10, 13.
k ver. 29; *cf.* Mk. 16. 8. *l* *cf.* Acts 10. 4; *cf.* 1 Sam. 1. 11, 20, 26-28.

2. [1] The history opens with what is highly significant. Zacharias is a priest, of the course of Abiah, in the days of Herod the king, and his wife is of the daughters of Aaron, and her name is Elisabeth. All is outwardly in order, though the days are evil days in Israel, as the name of Herod stamps them sufficiently. Yet the priests serve in their courses in the temple, according to what David had established, Zacharias being of the course of Abiah, "my Father is Jah," significantly, the *eighth* course. Not only this, they are both righteous before God, blamelessly walking in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. They are advanced in years, however, and without children: Elisabeth ("God's oath") is barren.

The whole is a picture of Israel, the priestly nation, not at its worst but at its best, as seen in a remnant, such as God's grace always maintained there, but which, under law dispensationally, could not inherit the promises. Nevertheless Jah could remember His oath, but only through the Kinsman Redeemer now to arise, and of whom the Gospel of Luke speaks.

[2] Zacharias comes, then, in the order of his course into the temple, his lot being to burn incense when he went in. The lot is the expression of the sovereign will of God, which in man's extremity has ever been his resource. Incense is the fragrance of Christ to God: not perhaps of atonement, but rather of Christ personally. And this is what is in view here. By and by it will be seen that atonement must be by His blood, and types and prophecies had long since declared this; yet in fact, historically when He did come the necessity of His death was kept much in the back-ground. Even the Baptist's pointing to the Lamb of God would seem from his after questions not to have been to himself so clear as we should naturally imagine it must have been. In general, at least, the reserve at first seems to be unquestionable: the incense came before the blood; as on the day of atonement it did also.

Zacharias, then, at the incense-altar sees the angel of the Lord. He stands at the right side of the altar—the right hand of power: for the power of that of which the altar speaks is with him: his visit is, as we see immediately, the expression of the sweet savor of Christ to God.

[3] Yet fear falls upon Zacharias: alas, this cannot surprise us; we are but too well accustomed to such misinterpretations of divine goodness on the part of His own. God means us good, and we charge Him with evil. Through lack of

name [m]John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall [n]rejoice at his birth. For he shall be [o]great in the sight of the Lord, and he shall [p]drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be [q]filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And many of the sons of Israel shall he [r]turn to [the] Lord their God. And he shall [s]go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of fathers to children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make [t]ready a people prepared for [the] Lord.

4 (18-23): the failure of unbelief.

[4] And Zacharias said unto the angel, [u]Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife advanced in years. And the angel answered and said to him, I am Gabriel, who stand in the [v]presence of God; and I have been sent to speak to thee, and to bring thee these glad tidings. And behold thou shalt be [w]silent, and not able to speak until the day in which these things shall come to pass, because thou believedst not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season. And the people were waiting for Zacharias, and wondered at his delaying in the temple. But when he came out he could not speak to them. And they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; and he kept making signs to them and remained dumb. And it came to pass, as soon as the days of his service were completed, he departed to his house.

5 (24, 25): the effect of being with God.

[5] Now after these days Elisabeth his wife conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath [the] Lord done to me in the days wherein he looked on me, to [x]take away my reproach among men.

3 (26-56): The revelation of the Holy One.

1 (26-38): the first annunciation.

3. [1] Now in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent

m vers. 60-63. *cf.* ver. 31.
n vers. 58, 67-79. *cf.* Ps. 32.5, 11.
o *cf.* Matt. 11. 7-11.
p *cf.* Matt. 11. 18. *cf.* Num. 6. 1-8. *cf.* Judg. 13. 4, 5.
q *cf.* vers. 41, 67. *cf.* Acts 2. 4. *ctr.* Eph. 1. 13.
r Mal. 4. 5, 6.
s *cf.* Mk. 1. 2, 3.
t *cf.* ch. 3. 1-17. *cf.* Acts 19. 4.
u *cf.* Gen. 18. 12. *cf.* Gen. 15. 8, etc.
v Dan. 8. 16. Dan. 9. 21. *cf.* Ps. 103. 20.
w *cf.* Ezek. 3. 26. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 13.
x Gen. 30. 23. *cf.* Is. 4. 1.

being perfected in the lesson of His love, the fear which has torment takes possession of us. How often has He to say to us, "Fear not," when He is about to give us perhaps the very blessing we have long sought.

So is it at least with Zacharias: the angel has to tell him that his prayer is heard, and a son is to be born to him; a rejoicing not to himself only but to many: for he comes, filled with the Spirit, to turn many to God in Israel, going before Him in the spirit and power of Elias, to make ready for the Lord a people.

[4] But Zacharias, though fearing God, is but too much after the pattern of his generation, and seeking a sign to satisfy him of what an angel has been sent from God to declare, gets the sign in his own person, being made dumb until the fulfilment of the angel's words. Thus also the priestly office has failed in Israel, her oracle is silent, her witness is that of judgment upon herself. The multitudes gaze upon her, only to behold her dumb: till by and by her season is fulfilled, and "God's oath" is no longer barren.

[5] In the consciousness that God is taking away her reproach Elisabeth hides herself. It is in this way that grace works. If God is with one, and this is known aright, it will not exalt but humble. Nothing, indeed, will duly humble but His presence: in the light of this who can exalt oneself?

3. [1] The angel Gabriel* is sent from God in the sixth month (of Elisabeth's pregnancy) with a more important message. Heaven, after the long silence of

*Gabriel means the "might of the Mighty One."

from God to a city of Galilee named [y]Nazareth, to a [z]virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the [a]house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in to her and said, Hail, thou [b]favored one! the Lord is with thee: [blessed art thou among women.*] But she was [c]troubled at that saying, and reasoned in her mind what kind of salutation this might be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God; and behold, [d]thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bear a son, and shalt [e]call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the [f]Son of the Highest; and [the] Lord God shall give unto him the [g]throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for the ages; and of his [h]kingdom there shall be no end. But Mary said unto the angel, How shall this be, since I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, [The] [i]Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the Holy Thing that shall be born shall be called [the] [j]Son of God. And behold, Elisabeth thy kinswoman, she also hath conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her that was called barren: for [k]nothing shall be impossible with God. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord: [l]be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

* Omitted by some of the oldest MSS.

y Matt.2.23.
z Matt.1.18, 23.
a *cf.* Matt.1. 20. *cf.* Rom. 1. 3.
b ver. 42. *cf.* Judg. 5. 24. *cf.* ch.11.27, 28.
c ver. 12. *cf.* Is. 66. 2.
d *cf.* Is. 7.14.
e Matt. 1.21. ch. 2. 21.
f *cf.* ch. 3.23, 38. *cf.* Rom.1.4. *cf.* Jno. 9. 35-38.
g Ps. 132. 11. *cf.* 1 Ki. 8. 25. *cf.* Is. 9.6,7. *cf.* Jer. 23. 5, 6.
h *cf.* Ps. 72. 5-8, 17. *cf.* Ps.89.36. *cf.* Mi. 4. 7.
i Matt. 1.20. *cf.* Lev.2.4.
j ver. 32. *cf.* Heb.1.2.
k *cf.* Gen.18. 13. *cf.* Jer. 32. 17, 27. *cf.* Rom. 4. 21.
l *cf.* 1 Sam. 25. 41. ver. 45.

centuries, is once again communicative, and in Luke in a more familiar way than Matthew, where it is Joseph who receives the messages, but in a dream. Here we have open face to face speech, and the most important not in the temple, but in a private dwelling. God is coming near in His grace; and always the nearer He comes the more fully He reveals Himself.

Not only is the angel's mission now not to the temple nor to Jerusalem, it is to Galilee of the Gentiles, and to Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man named Joseph, of the fallen house of David: the virgin's name is Mary, or Miriam ("exalted"). All is in ruin here, when God comes in to revive and raise to higher glory.

By the favor of God she is to have a Son, who will be called the Son of the Most High, and, through her the Son of David, shall receive His father's throne, but with unending empire. Then, in answer to Mary's question, it is declared that the Holy Spirit should come upon her, and power of the Highest overshadow her, so that the Holy Thing born should be called the Son of God. This is not, then, the truth of incarnation declared, though, of course, in perfect accordance with it; it is that of a Man born by divine intervention, without human father,—Son of God, but as Man. And this is Luke's theme: it is the Gospel of the Manhood.

Son of man, He is yet a Second Man, a Man without taint of the fall: a new Adam we cannot speak of as yet; for to this two things are needed, which are not as yet brought out: His full, proper Deity, and His atonement. We have had both, of course, in the previous Gospels: we shall find them all, I think, for the first time connected in the Gospel of John.

Mary yields herself to the Lord's will; and the angel departs from her.

2 (39–45): the confirmation.

2 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill-country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered into the house of Zacharias, and [m] saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, as Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was [n] filled with [the] Holy Spirit; and cried out with a loud voice, and said, [o] Blessed art thou among women, and blessed the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my [p] Lord should come unto me? for behold, as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe [q] leaped in my womb with joy. And [r] blessed is she that believed: for there shall be an accomplishment of those things that have been spoken to her from [the] Lord.

3 (46–56): the realization and praise.

(*A*) Power in grace.

3 And [s] Mary said:

My soul doth [t] magnify the Lord;
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my [u] Saviour:
For he hath regarded the [v] low estate of his handmaiden;
for, behold, from henceforth [w] all generations shall call me blessed:

(*a*) whole-hearted praise.

(*b*) the low estate regarded.

m cf. Mal. 3. 16. *cf.* Ps. 16. 3.
n cf. vers. 15, 67.
o cf. ver. 28.
p cf. ver. 47. *cf.* Col. 1. 18.
q cf. Jno. 3. 29. *cf.* Ps. 8. 2.
r ver. 38. *cf.* Ps. 2. 12. *cf.* Heb. 11. 6.
s cf. 1 Sam. 2. 1–10 *cf.* vers. 67–79.
t cf. Ps. 34. 2, 3. *cf.* Ps. 69. 30.
u cf. Matt. 1. 21. *cf.* Acts 4. 12. *cf.* Matt. 12. 46–50.
v cf. 2 Sam. 7. 18–20. Ps. 138. 6.
w vers. 28, 42; *cf.* Acts 1. 14; *cf.* Matt. 26. 13.

2 Before departing, however, he has referred her to Elisabeth, as a sign of the power of God at work, to which nothing is impossible; and Mary, who has asked for no sign to be given her, yet "drinks of the brook in the way," and goes "with haste," as one feeling the weight of what had been communicated to her, to seek refreshment in the company of her kinswoman, linked with her as she is in faith, and now by this new work of God which is beginning to accomplish the long looked for blessing. She enters the house of Zacharias and salutes Elisabeth.

Here the tender mercy of God meets her with a surprise. When Elisabeth hears the salutation of Mary, the very babe within her leaps for joy, and the Spirit fills her at once with divine intelligence. She cries out to her, "Blessed art thou among women," repeating the words of the angel* which had been matter of wonderment to her before. She adds, "And blessed is the fruit of thy womb;" and then expressly addresses her as the mother of her Lord, at whose voice the babe had leaped in her womb for joy. Blessed, she declares her to be also, in the faith which had received the divine message; and there would be an accomplishment of that which had been spoken to her from the Lord,—from Jehovah.†

3 Thus, if the unbelief of Zacharias meets with rebuke, though tender rebuke, from God, the faith of Mary receives abundant encouragement. Her heart overflows as she realizes the grace that has made her answer to her name, and she pours out her soul in a song of praise which reflects much that of Hannah (1 Sam. ii. 1–10). It is in fact largely an Old Testament strain, a psalm such as might well become a daughter of David; only with the new gladness of the promises to the fathers being just fulfilled, a covenant going back of Moses to Abraham and his Seed: a ground of blessing to all the families of the earth.

There are three parts; the first of which speaks of the power of God which has intervened in grace to deliver and bless with a blessing that shall resound

* If the majority of the MSS. have here preserved the text; and one does not see why, upon such an occasion as the present, the repetition of the words should not have been intended as divine comfort and strength for Mary.

† Wherever "Lord" is without the article in the Greek, or bracketed in the text here, it stands for Jehovah in the Hebrew, which in the Greek Septuagint is always "Lord."

(c) His holiness.
(d His mercy.
(B) Reversals.
(a) might against pride.
(b) high and low.
(c) the filled and the full.
(C) God's remembrance.

For he that is mighty hath done for me [x] great things;
and [y] holy is his name.
And his [z] mercy is to generations and generations,—
to them that fear him.
He hath showed [a] strength with his arm:
he hath [b] scattered the haughty in the thought of their heart;
He hath [c] put down rulers from thrones,
and exalted the lowly.
He hath filled the [d] hungry with good things;
and the [e] rich he hath sent empty away.
He hath helped Israel his [f] servant,
in remembrance* of his mercy;
as he [g] spake unto our fathers,
to Abraham and his seed for ever.

And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.

4 (57-66): The mercy found.

4. Now Elisabeth's time was fulfilled for her to bear; and she [h] brought forth a son. And her neighbors and kindred heard that [the] Lord had magnified his mercy towards her, and they [i] rejoiced with her. And it came to pass on the [j] eighth day that they came to circumcise the child: and they were calling it after his father's name, Zacharias. But his mother answered and said, Nay, but he shall be called [k] John. And they said to her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father as to what he would have him called. And he asked for a writing-table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they

x *cf.* Ruth. 4. 14-17. *cf.* Ps. 136.4.
y Ps. 111. 9. *cf.* Jno. 17. 11.
z Ex. 20. 6. Ps. 103. 17.
a Ps. 98. 1. *cf.* Ezek. 20. 33, 34.
b Jas. 4. 6. *cf.* Gen. 11. 4, 8.
c *cf.* Dan. 2. 21. Ps. 75. 6, 7.
d *cf.* Matt. 5. 6. *cf.* ch. 6. 25.
e ch. 6. 24. *cf.* ch. 18. 23, 24.
f *cf.* Is. 44. 21.
g Gen. 17. 19. Gen. 26. 24. Gen. 28. 13-15.
h vers. 13, 24.
i ver. 14.
j *cf.* Gen. 17. 9-14. ch. 2. 21.
k ver. 13. *cf.* Gen. 17. 19 with Gen. 21. 3.

* Literally: that he might remember.

through following generations. Soul and spirit unite in joy and praise; and the great things done proclaim the holiness of His Name; His mercy is to many generations of those that fear Him.

The second part shows, in view of what the world is, the complete reversal of things when God comes in. The pride of man is smitten down before Him; rulers are put down from their thrones, and the lowly exalted, the hungry are filled and the rich sent empty away.

The third part gives the blessed fact in which all this is realized. God has remembered His promises to the fathers, seemingly so long forgotten,—mercies only, for Israel's utter failure could allow no possible claim. All the more did they witness to what was in Him, and so could not fail. The help come to Israel was indeed but what enclosed a purpose of wider blessing which the promise to Abraham unconditionally declared.

For in fact the Christ of Israel is the Son of man; the Seed of the woman bruises the serpent's head; life, righteousness and sanctification are in Him who (crucified through weakness) is the wisdom of God and the power of God by grace through faith alike for all.

4. And now, Elisabeth's full time having come, she brings forth the promised son. Her neighbors and kindred come round her, hearing of the Lord's mercy, and rejoice with her. Upon the circumcising of the child on the eighth day the name was given, as then he came into covenant place and privilege; and the friends propose for the son of Zacharias his father's name. But the mother says, "Nay, but he shall be called John," and the father, when appealed to, confirms

all wondered. And his [t]mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue [loosed], and he spake, blessing God. And [m]fear came upon all who dwelt round about them; and in all the hill-country of Judea all these things were spoken about. And all that heard them laid them up in their heart, saying, What then shall this child be? for the [n]hand of [the] Lord also was with him.

5 (67-80): God with Israel.

1 (67-75): His faithfulness.

(*a*) Jehovah, the God of Israel.

(*b*) the Saviour.

(*c*) fulfilment of the prophets.

(*d*) the mercy at last experienced.

(*e*) way and end.

2 (76-80): the herald of salvation.

(*a*) the forerunner.

(*b*) the ministry of salvation.

5. And Zacharias his father was [o]filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying,

[p]Blessed be [the] Lord, the God of Israel;
for he hath [q]visited and wrought redemption for his people;
And he hath raised up a [r]horn of salvation for us,
in the house of his servant [s]David:
As he [t]spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, from of old,
salvation from our [u]enemies,
and out of the hand of all that hate us:
To work [v]mercy with our fathers,
and [w]remember his holy covenant:
the [x]oath that he sware to our father Abraham,
That he would give us, [y]without fear,
[z]delivered from the enemies' hand, to serve him,
in [a]piety and righteousness before him, all our days.
And thou, child, shalt be called the [b]prophet of the Highest:
for thou shalt [c]go before the face of [the] Lord, to prepare his ways:
To give [d]knowledge of salvation unto his people,
by the remission of their sins;

t ver. 20. *cf.* Ezek. 24. 27. *cf.* Ezek. 33. 22.
m cf. ch. 5. 26.
n cf. Ezek. 37. 1. *cf.* Gen. 39. 2.
o cf. vers. 41, 46-55.
p 1 Chron. 29. 10, 20. *cf.* 2 Chron. 6. 4.
q cf. Gen. 50. 24. *cf.* Ex. 3. 16. *cf.* Jer. 29. 10. *cf.* Zech. 10. 3. *cf.* ch. 7. 16.
r cf. Ezek. 29. 21. *cf.* Ps. 132. 17.
s cf. Ps. 89. 20-29. *cf.* Acts 13. 34.
t cf. Is. 11. 1, etc. *cf.* Jer. 23. 5, 6. *cf.* Ezek. 37. 24. *cf.* Mi. 5. 2.
u cf. Ps. 18, title; *cf.* Ps. 72. 4.
v Ps. 67. 1, etc.
w cf. Gen. 9. 15. Ps. 98. 3. *cf.* Is. 63. 11.
x Gen. 22. 16.
y cf. Ex. 20. 18-21 with Rom. 8. 15.
z ver. 71; Ps. 44. 5, 7.
a Ps. 96. 9; *cf.* Zech. 14. 20, 21.
b Matt. 11. 5; Matt. 14. 5.
c ch. 3. 4.
d cf. Jno. 4. 22; *cf.* Acts 13. 38, 39.

this. Immediately his mouth is opened and his tongue loosed; and he speaks out, blessing God. Thus too will Israel when she has learnt to call the offspring of her old age "the grace of Jehovah," find her tongue loosed, and bless God. And the hand of Jehovah will again be with the remnant that He has raised up.

5. The prophecy of Zacharias, filled with the Spirit, celebrates, as has been already said, Jehovah's remembrance of the covenant oath. The first part declares His faithfulness in this: He has become once more the God of Israel, as redemption witnesses. A horn of salvation, a Saviour, has been raised up in the house of David, a deliverance from all their enemies, that thus delivered they may serve Him without fear, in piety and righteousness.

The second part is more evangelic; and John appears in it as more than the austere messenger of repentance. He is the fore-runner of Jehovah Himself, to prepare His ways; to give the knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins. This is quite according to the character of the peace-offering Gospel; and it is striking to find it at the very beginning. God is manifested thus in the tenderness of His compassion, in which the dayspring from on high chases away the shades of night where men sit hopeless, and guides the feet into the way of peace.

Thus the unbelief which had clouded Zacharias' vision in the temple disappears, and the blessing of the people, which had been hindered by the chasten-

(c) the dayspring from on high.

(d) to guide in the way.

On account of the tender* mercy of our God,
wherein the [e]dayspring from on high hath visited us,
To shine upon those sitting in [f]darkness and the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.

And the child [g]grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts until the [h]time of his showing forth to Israel.

e *cf.* 2 Sam. 23. 4. *cf.* Mal. 4. 2.
f *cf.* Is. 9. 2. *cf.* Matt. 4. 15, 16.
g *cf.* ch. 2. 40.
h ch. 3. 1, 2.

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chap. ii.)

A Saviour, and a testimony to Him.

1 (1-7): His birth in Bethlehem ordered of God acting through the throne of the world.

1. NOW it came to pass in those days that a [i]decree went out from Cæsar Augustus, that a census should be made of all the habitable [earth]. The census itself first took place when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, [j]every one to his own city. Now Joseph also went up from Galilee out of the city Nazareth into Judea, to the [k]city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his [l]espoused, who was great with child. And it came to pass while they were there, that the days were fulfilled for her to bring forth; and she [m]brought forth her first-

i *cf.* Jno. 19. 11.
j *cf.* Josh. 24. 28.
k 1 Sa. 16. 1. Jno. 7. 42.
l ch. 1. 27.
m Matt. 1. 23, 25.

* Gk., "bowels of mercy."

ing hand upon him, is restored and multiplied. Indeed it seems as if now Israel's full blessing were at hand: as it was really, if only they had heart for it. Who could imagine that their own refusal was to put away from them for now nearly two milleunia what was then close at hand? Yet come it shall, for God has promised it; and its coming cannot surely be much longer delayed.

SUBD. 2.

As compared with Matthew—the only other Gospel which gives at all the circumstances of His birth or infancy—the account of the Lord's coming into the world is clearly in keeping with the Gospel of the Manhood. There is no incident that the two have in common, and each maintains its own character with the most perfect consistency. In the one the Gentile magi may come to do homage to a King of the Jews; in the other, to shepherds in the field heaven opens to announce a Saviour. The testimony of Simeon and Anna is also to a Saviour and salvation. His circumcision, and the offerings at His presentation to the Lord, alike show Him to us in the "*likeness* of sinful flesh"; while His growth and development testify to the verity of His Manhood. These things are in full accord with the truth presented in Luke,—each one being necessary to it.

1. How thorough is the humiliation into which He is come is shown by the circumstances of His birth. Cæsar is lord of the world, and orders it as he will, for his own purposes. How different a world from that which *He* had made at the beginning; yet He is in it as under Cæsar's rule, Joseph and Mary being brought out of Nazareth to Bethlehem to be enrolled as of David's line. Spite of all this, the power of the world is unconsciously working to fulfil a prophecy concerning One it knows not; and this being accomplished, the design drops through as if it had never been: "the census itself first took place when Cyrenius (or Quirinus) was governor of Syria"—some years afterward.

Thus the Lord of all is born a Man, among men His creatures, and laid in a

born son, and wrapped him in swaddling-bands,* and laid him in a manger, because there was [n]no room for them in the inn.

2 (8-20): The angels' announcement.

2. And there were in the same country [o]shepherds abiding in the field, and keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, an [p]angel of [the] Lord stood by them, and the glory of [the] Lord shone round them, and they were afraid with great fear. And the angel said unto them, [q]Fear not: for behold, I bring to you good tidings of great [r]joy which shall be to all the people: for there hath been born to you to-day in the city of David a [s]Saviour who is Christ, [the] [t]Lord. And this shall be the sign to you: ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling-bands,* and lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a [u]multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, [v]Glory to God in the highest, and on earth [w]peace, good pleasure in men.†

* Or, "enswathed him," one word in the Gk.
† Some of the earlier MSS. read, "among men of good pleasure."

n *cf.* Jno. 1. 10, 11. *cf.* ch.23.18. *cf.* Phil. 3. 20.
o *cf.* Ps.78.70 -72. *cf.* Ps. 23.1.
p *cf.* ch.1.11, 26.
q *cf.* ch.1.29, 30.
r *cf.* Zeph.3. 14. *cf.* Zech. 2. 10.
s Matt.1.21. *cf.* Is. 63. 1, 8, 9.
t *cf.* Jno. 1. 41, 49. *cf.* 1 Cor.12. 3. *cf.* Acts 2. 36.
u Ps. 148. 2. Rev. 5. 11.
v *cf.* Job 38. 7. *cf.* ch.19.38. *cf.* Ex. 15.1. *cf.* Rev. 5. 13, 14.
w *cf.* Ps. 72. 2, 3; *cf.* Is. 52.7; *cf.* Col.1.20; *cf.* Eph. 2. 17.

manger, because there is no room for them in the inn. Sad sign, surely, of men's condition, when their Maker, come to be their Saviour, prophesied of in every particular as coming, heralded even now by angelic visitation, could come after all unnoticed and unknown!

2. As already said, in Luke the announcement is, not of a King of the Jews, but of a Saviour; and it is not to the great or wise, but "to the poor the gospel is preached." To shepherds keeping watch over their flocks, the news is brought of the Good Shepherd who goeth after that which is lost; and here it is not a star in the heavens that is the sign, but heaven itself opens, and the angels bring a direct face to face message, while the glory of the Lord shines round about. Good tidings of great joy there are for all the people: a Saviour who is Christ the Lord. And now there is a sign: what is it? Not a sign in heaven, but a little babe, and wrapped in swaddling clothes. Not in a king's palace, but lying in a manger!

How unlike are the thoughts of God to those of men! The Deliverer is a Son of man; nay, the Seed of the woman. Divine power has clothed itself in weakness to accomplish that for which mere power was not competent: for the battle here is not to the strong; an infant bound in swaddling-bands is no symbol of strength, nor a manger that of favoring circumstances, but the very opposite. Still, in such a conflict as is here impending, difficulties may be used to manifest the overcomer, as darkness to bring out the stars. And in a world ruled by God, there must after all be victory in goodness, which the stripping off of mere strength may make plain; nay, the accumulation of all that we conceive as power on the opposite side.

This little babe brings out the praise of angels, if the earth is silent and asleep. The hosts of heaven praise on man's behalf, and with a fuller praise than when, at creation first, "all the sons of God shouted for joy:" "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good pleasure in men."

Sin has dishonored God, and thus introduced conflict where all was harmony. Man, the image of God, set over all else on earth, has fallen lower than was possible for the beast, and after centuries of trial has only demonstrated the impossibility of self-recovery. The first man has had children in his own image, himself repeated in every one of them but too faithfully. But now, at last, there is a Second Man. At last God is glorified in the scene of His dishonor,

And it came to pass, as the angels departed from them into heaven, that the shepherds said one to another, Let us go now as far as Bethlehem, and see this thing that hath come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us. And they came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger. Now, when they had seen it, they [x]made known* about that which had been spoken to them concerning this child; and all who heard it [y]wondered at the things which had been spoken to them by the shepherds. But Mary [z]kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, as it had been spoken to them.

3 (21-39): The testimony of the Spirit, on His presentation to the Lord. 1 (21-24): the Obedient One, according to the law, and First-born.

3. [1] And when [a]eight days were fulfilled for circumcising him, his name was called Jesus; which was so called by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

x *cf.* Matt.2. 10, 11. *cf.* Mal.3.16.

y *cf.* ch.1.58. *cf.* Is. 9. 6.

z *cf.* Gen.37. 11. ver. 51. *cf.* ch. 1.66.

a Gen.17.12. ch. 1. 59. *cf.* Col.2.11 -14.

* Some MSS. add, "around."

nay, in a manner which has given heaven itself such a theme of praise as it has never known before. Here is for earth's wounds a healing power, for its conflict peace, if delayed yet assured; and for men more than justification of wisdom's old delight in them. The Second Man becomes the last Adam of a new humanity, the embrace of God for a renewed creation.

So the angels depart, and the shepherds go their way to Bethlehem, to find all as the angels had declared, and to make known to others what they have heard and seen. All who hear it wonder; Mary ponders it in her heart; the shepherds praise and glorify God.

3. After the testimony of angels we have now that of the Spirit of God when Jesus is presented to the Lord: a fitting occasion, and the witness that of One who from the beginning inspired the prophets to speak and write of Him. Besides Simeon and Anna, the types and shadows of the Old Testament find here their suited place, though the Antitype of necessity transcends them all.

[1] First, He is circumcised, and receives at that time the significant name given Him before His birth—that of Jesus. He is afterwards presented to the Lord as a first-born Son, or as the law expresses it, one opening the womb. While next we hear of a sacrifice presented on the part of His mother, as to which He declares in the burnt-offering psalm, "In the volume of the book it is *written of Me*" (Ps. xl. 7). All this we must briefly look at.

His circumcision, as the apostle says of this, makes Him "debtor to do the whole law" (Gal. v. 3). "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, come of a woman, come under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Gal. iv. 4, 5). He thus pledges Himself to full legal obedience, which on His part is to have no relaxation. To others He is to be the Source of a grace which for Himself He is never to know. And the law itself marks out for Him a special place, apart from all others.

At His circumcision it is that He receives the name of "Jesus" (Jehovah the Saviour) of which it was said, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt. i. 21). He comes under the law as the Redeemer from under it.

As such we find Him directly under the law of the first-born, and presented to the Lord. Every first-born son is holy to the Lord, and thus God claims the whole family as His; thus He acknowledges the claim and presents them to Him.

We have already seen what family this is of which He is the First-born. It is not Mary's; though through His mother He may have brethren merely

And when the days of their [b]purification were fulfilled according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of [the] Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord), and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of [the] Lord, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons.

2 (25-32): salvation seen.

[2] And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and this man was [c]just and pious, waiting for the [d]consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it was divinely shown to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not [e]see death until he had seen [the] Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, that they might do for him according to the custom of the law, he took him into his arms, and blessed God, and said:—

b Lev. 12. 6-8. Ex. 13. 2. *cf.* Gal. 4. 4, 5.

c ch. 1. 6. vers. 36, 38.

d *cf.* Is. 40. 1. *cf.* Is. 54. 11-13.

e *cf.* Mk. 9. 1. *cf.* Jno. 21. 22. *cf.* 1 Thess. 4. 17.

human. But the true family must be sons of God, though also human. It is in the very idea, a *human* family, as He is presented as One opening the womb. On the other hand, the whole human family it is not; while yet again all men are invited and urged to become members of it. Those who do so are thus "sons of God, by faith, in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 26), as He is true Man, and Son of God *as Man* also.

In Hebrews, in which He is distinctly called "the First-born" (chap. i. 6), occurs the passage in which is affirmed at the same time His kinship with and His great diversity from, those whom, because they are all of one with Him, He is not ashamed to call His brethren (ii. 11). Yet He is the Sanctifier, they are the sanctified; and forasmuch as they are partakers of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise took part in the same (ver. 14); for in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people (ver. 17, *Gk.*).

We see, then, what this relationship as First-born involves for Him. He is taking up a path peculiar to Himself. He is acknowledging the claim of God upon that family with which He is in true and abiding relationship, and who are in Him presented to God. But these are sinners: they are those who are to be "sanctified" by Him,—"sanctified," as the epistle itself explains it, "by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ" (ch. x. 10). His priestly work is the offering of *Himself* (vii. 27). Immediately here, therefore, the shadow of this falls over His path: Mary, His mother, must bring her offering for purification (see Lev. xii., *Notes*). He is "in the likeness"—only in the likeness, but still that—"of sinful flesh" (Rom. viii. 3). His connection with a human mother brings for Him that shadow which acquired its fullest character, as it found its explanation, in the darkness of the Cross. He touches here the margin of that which He was to know in all its dread reality. For He was to be Himself the sacrifice to put away the shadow, and that how gloriously! shadow dispelling shadow evermore.

The sacrifice here is, as we know, the sacrifice of the poor. It is, at the same time, that which if it does not speak of fullest *sacrifice*, does surely of the Heavenly One; and the dove or pigeon is the only sacrificial bird required in the law.

[2] It is as thus presented to the Lord that the testimony of the Spirit is given as to Him. We find once again the people who fear God, and with whom the secret of the Lord is, not among the heads of the nation, but little known of men, though in communion with one another as those upon whom the Spirit of

(a) peace from the sovereign act of God. (b) salvation going forth. (c) a revelation of the nations and Israel's glory.

Now, Sovereign Lord, thou [f]art letting thy servant go,
according to thy word, in peace:
For mine eyes have [g]seen thy salvation,
which thou hast prepared before the face of [h]all the peoples:
A light for revelation of [the] [i]nations,
and the [j]glory of thy people Israel.

3 (33–35): a revelation of the hearts.

[3] And his father and mother were in [k]wonder at the things spoken concerning him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this [child] is appointed for the [l]fall and rising up of many in Israel, and for a sign spoken against; yea and a [m]sword shall pierce through thine own soul, that the [n]thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

4 36–39): the widow.

[4] And there was a prophetess, [o]Anna, daughter of

f *cf.* Gen. 46. 30. *cf.* Phil. 2. 17.
g ch. 3. 6. *ctr.* Lam. 3. 26. *cf.* Is. 25. 9.
h *cf.* ver. 10. *cf.* Gen. 12. 3.
i Is. 49. 6. Is. 60. 1–3. *cf.* Acts 26. 17, 18.
j *cf.* Is. 40. 5. *cf.* 1 Sam. 4. 21, 22. *cf.* Is. 4. 4, 5.
k *cf.* vers. 18, 19, 48, 51.
l *cf.* Rom. 9. 32, 33. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8.
m *cf.* Jno. 19. 25–27; *cf.* ch. 24. 21. n *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24; *cf.* Matt. 22. 41–46. o *cf.* 2 Chron. 34. 22.

God is. Of Simeon we know nothing but his character as just and pious and waiting for the consolation of Israel. It was not merely for his own, even spiritual good: his heart longed for the blessing of the people of God, keenly feeling their condition and what alone could meet it,—Who alone could bring effectual comfort. To him it was given by the Spirit to know that he should not see death till he had seen the Christ, Jehovah's Anointed.

He comes, therefore, into the temple at the time Jesus is brought in, and taking Him into his arms, breaks out in praise. This praise, moreover, goes far beyond the consolation of Israel, while it includes this: for the bud of God's promise has a sweeter, richer unfolding than the promise itself implies. Simeon, no doubt, did not realize all that his words pointed to, and there were still developments to be in the day just dawning.

(*a*) He begins with what is personal to himself. God is acting in His sovereignty, and he can rejoice: for sovereignty with Him means sovereign goodness; He has fulfilled His word to him, and now he may depart in peace. What, indeed, could man have sought or imagined on God's part so blessed as He has done? Who could have thought of what the Babe in Simeon's arms meant for the heart that could take it in?

(*b*) Simeon knew, at last, that here was God's salvation. If not as yet wrought out, here was the Worker of it; and his faith did not fail as he contemplated the weakness of those infant hands to which it had been committed. Already his eyes had seen it: a salvation which as such, though it might come from Israel, could not be shut up in Israel; nay, God had prepared it before the face of all the peoples. Could it be less in God's desire than world-wide, with the same need on all sides calling for it?

(*c*) Israel and the Gentiles must be both in the purpose of God; and so much had the Old Testament already declared should be; but Simeon puts them in another order than the Old Testament. "A light," he says, "for the revelation of the nations:" to bring those that had been hidden, sitting in darkness and the shadow of death, into the light of divine blessing. And then "the glory of Thy people Israel." But this will be more fully declared as we go on.

[3] Simeon does not see the bright side only, nor imagine that even God's message of salvation will be at once welcomed because of the need men have of it. While Joseph and Mary wonder at the things that are spoken of Him, he turns to the mother with the warning of what divine light will reveal as to the hearts of men. The Child was appointed for the fall as well as the rising up of many in Israel, and as a sign—surely the most significant that could be—yet to be spoken *against*. Yea, a sword would pierce through her own soul also. For the presence of Christ as light would bring all to light.

[4] Anna completes the number of these witnesses. All else have failed with

Phanuel, of the tribe of [p] Aser, who was far advanced in years, having lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; and she was a [q] widow of as much as eighty-four years; who departed not from the temple, [r] serving with fastings and prayers night and day. And she, coming in at the same hour, gave thanks to God, and [s] spake of him to all those that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.*

4 (40-52): The ways of the youth of Jesus.

4. And when they had completed all things according to the law of [the] Lord, they [t] returned to Galilee, to their own city Nazareth. And the child [u] grew and waxed strong [in spirit,†] being filled with wisdom, and the favor of God was upon him.

And his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the [v] feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, and they had gone up after the custom of the feast, and when they had completed the days, as they returned, the child Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem.

p *cf.* 2 Chr. 30. 11. *cf.* Rom. 11. 5.
q *cf.* 1 Tim. 5. 5. *cf.* Is. 54. 1.
r *cf.* Ex. 38. 8. *cf.* Ps. 27. 4.
s *cf.* ch. 1. 39, etc. *cf.* Mal. 3. 16.
t *cf.* Matt. 2. 19–23. *cf.* Jno. 1. 46. *cf.* ch. 4. 16, 22.
u ver. 52. *cf.* Jno. 1. 14. *cf.* Jno. 4. 6. *cf.* Heb. 4. 15.
v Deut. 16. 2. *cf.* 1 Sam. 1. 24.

* Or "the redemption of Jerusalem." † Omitted by most editors.

her; but she has been brought into the wilderness only that God may speak comfortably to her. She is a true child of Asher, the "happy," and of Phanuel, the "face of God;" her name Anna, "grace," identifying her with the principle of a life like hers, where fastings and prayers are but love's service, and her prophesying the outflow of intercourse with God. A blessed picture! Christ will surely be with such the thanksgiving of the heart, and the theme of the tongue. Already it was so with those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

4. The visit of the magi and the consequent flight into Egypt are omitted in this Gospel; on the other hand we have here the only notice of the Lord's youth. It naturally finds its place in the Gospel of the Manhood, being evidently intended to show the truly human development of this. The words are simple and natural, with no pretentiousness of knowledge and yet no plea of ignorance; no apology indeed of any kind; no attempt at explanation or reconciliation. We find in them a true, while yet a perfect Child; growing mentally, just as we have no doubt He grew in body; filled with wisdom, no room in Him for folly at any time: His heart turned constantly to God, and so the favor of God resting ever upon Him. Little do we realize how spiritual aim affects the mental capacity. These points are at the end of the chapter taken up once more and emphasized: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."

Between these statements we have that story of His youth, which shows what His aim was,—the way in which already, at twelve years old, He was occupied with His Father's business. This was the age at which the Jewish child began to come up to Jerusalem at the festivals; and here for the first time it was, no doubt, that the schools of the greater Rabbis were open to Him. How great must have been the attraction to Him of the teaching and discussions of the spiritual leaders of Israel, with whom He was to be in relations so different at a later time! Thus He remains at Jerusalem, after the company with whom He had been had left it on the return to Galilee, and is found there by Joseph and His mother on the third day "in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers."

Yet how little did those know Him who should have known Him best upon earth! "And when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother"—she who had learnt of Him from angels' lips, and had been pondering in her heart

And his parents knew not of it; but, supposing him to be in the company, they went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kindred and acquaintances: and, not finding him, they turned back to Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass after three days that they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both hearing them and asking them [w]questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him they were amazed, and his mother said to him, Child, [x]why hast thou dealt thus with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee in distress. And he said unto them, Why is it that ye sought me? did ye not know that I ought to be about* my [y]Father's business? And they did not understand the thing he spake to them.

And he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was [z]subject to them. And his mother [a]kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus [b]increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and men.

w *cf.* ver.52.

x *cf.* Jno. 2. 3, 4. *ctr.* ch.1.35, 38.

y *cf.* Heb.10. 5-10. *cf.* Jno.6.38 -40.

z *cf.* Eph.6.1 with 1 Pet. 2. 21.

a ver. 19. *cf.* Matt. 9. 30.

b ver. 40. *cf.* 1 Sam.2. 26.

* Literally "in the things of my Father." Surely not as R. V. "in my Father's house."

so much already—"said to Him, Child, why hast Thou dealt thus with us? behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee in distress." From the mere human side of things that was no wonder; but alas that we should be so much at the mere human side of things! "And He said unto them, Why is it that ye sought Me? did ye not know that I ought to be about My Father's business?" It is strange indeed that any should think that this was His own waking up to such a thought. For in this case how could He speak of it as a strange thing that *they* should not before have had this thought? On the contrary, it is plain they ought to have understood it from all that they had ever seen of Him. This absolute devotedness had been His "wisdom" ever, only manifested more as His child-life expanded into youth and manhood. Thus this visit to Jerusalem, and to what He afterwards used to call His Father's house, comes in between His earlier and His later life in Nazareth, giving the character of it all, while He filled too His place in that human family life, which was His Father's will for Him, subject to the authority of those who at best knew Him so little. Still His mother kept in her heart and thought upon what was still beyond her, God's favor towards Him more and more manifesting itself as the development went on of that which, for the present, drew out man's favor also. For as yet He had not come forth into that place of public ministry and appeal on God's part which would lead on to His rejection by those after whom in grace He had come, and for one brief, awful moment to the transcendent sorrow of the abandonment of the cross also. But thus were His words to be fulfilled, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me" (John xii. 32).

Subd. 3.

We have next, after eighteen years more of silence from that passover at Jerusalem, the manifestation of Christ in the midst of Israel. His forerunner, John, proclaims Him as at hand; then, after His baptism by John, He is borne witness to by the Father's voice from heaven, is openly sealed by the Spirit of God descending in bodily form, like a dove, upon Him; lastly, He is vindicated under trial, tempted by the devil in the wilderness. In all this, Luke follows in the track of the other Synoptic Gospels; although Mark omits the details of the temptation. We shall seek to compare the three accounts as we may be enabled.

SUBDIVISION 3. (Chaps. iii.–iv. 13.)
Manifested and Sealed with the Spirit.

1 (iii. 1-14): The way of righteousness: a solitary voice in a barren land.

1. NOW, in the fifteenth year of the [c]government of Tiberius Cæsar, [d]Pontius Pilate being governor of Judæa, and [e]Herod tetrarch of Galilee, but [f]Philip his brother tetrarch of Ituræa and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, in the [g]high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the [h]word of God came upon John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the region round about Jordan, [i]preaching a baptism of repentance for remission of sins; as it is [j]written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet: A voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of [the] Lord; make straight his paths. Every [k]valley shall be filled, and every [l]mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the [m]crooked places shall become a straight [path], and the rough places smooth ways; and [n]all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Then said he to the multitudes that came forth to be baptized of him, [o]Offspring of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, [p]fruits worthy of repentance; and begin not to say within yourselves, We have [q]Abraham for [our] father: for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And even now also is the [r]axe laid at the root of the trees: every tree, therefore, that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. And the multitudes asked him, saying, [s]What should we do, then? And he answered and said unto them, He that hath [t]two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath food, let him do likewise. And there

c *cf.* Matt. 22. 7, etc.
d *cf.* Mk. 15. 1, etc.
e *cf.* Matt. 14. 1, etc. *cf.* ch. 13. 31, etc.
f *cf.* Mk. 6. 17.
g *cf.* Jno. 11. 49. *cf.* Jno. 18. 13, 14.
h *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 26-29. *cf.* 1 Cor. 2. 8. *cf.* Matt. 11. 8. *cf.* Rev. 1. 9.
i Matt. 3. 1, 2. Mk. 1. 4. Jno. 1. 6-8.
j Is. 40. 3-5. Matt. 3. 3. Mk. 1. 3. Jno. 1. 23.
k *cf.* Jas. 1. 9.
l *cf.* Jas. 1. 10. *cf.* ch. 18. 14. *cf.* Is. 1. 12-17.
m *cf.* Eccle. 1. 15. *cf.* Is. 59. 8.
n Ps. 98. 2. Is. 52. 10.
o Matt. 3. 7-10. *cf.* Is. 14. 29. *cf.* Jno. 8. 44.
p *cf.* Acts 26. 20 with Acts 19. 18-20. *cf.* 2 Cor. 7. 10, 11.
q *cf.* Rom. 9. 7. *cf.* Jno. 8. 33-40.
r *cf.* ch. 13. 6-10; *cf.* Rom. 2. 4.
s *cf.* Acts 2. 37; *cf.* Acts 9. 6. *cf.* Acts 16. 30, 31.
t *cf.* Matt. 10. 10.; *cf.* Jas. 2. 15, 16.

1. The first part is introductory, the voice of the Old Testament in the New. John the Baptist coming in the way of righteousness, as the Lord characterizes him, and therefore with his baptism of repentance, since the legal requirement of righteousness only brands all men as under hopeless condemnation, and repentance is but the heart-acknowledgment of this, that grace may appear in its own sovereignty. Luke is fuller in detail here than either Matthew or Mark, though he has less of austerity in the Baptist's ways: neither his rough dress nor diet is mentioned. On the other hand the way of the Lord is more insisted on as to be prepared only by the bringing down of the mountains and the filling up of the valleys,—bringing all flesh to a common level before God, that the salvation of God may be seen by all. Thus baptism is to Jordan, the river of death, to which men's sins bring them, and not their goodness, but to find remission.

The very description of the time shows the condition of ruin in Israel—of the people under law. Even the show of a united kingdom in Israel is gone, Herod's being quartered—the sign of weakness being stamped upon it in the tetrarchies; and a fourth part, Judea itself, under a Roman governor. The high priesthood is divided between the two Sadducees, Annas and Caiaphas. Judah is losing its tribal rod, and Shiloh must appear, to gather the peoples.

came also unto him [u]tax-gatherers to be baptized, and they said unto him, Teacher, what should we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed to you. And soldiers also asked him, saying, And we, what should we do? And he said unto them, Do [v]violence to no one; nor accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

2 (iii.15-20:) His testimony to Christ.

2. Now, as the people were in [w]expectation, and all were reasoning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, John answered them all, saying, [x]I indeed baptize you with water, but there cometh One mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: *he* shall baptize you with [the] [y]Holy Spirit and [with] [z]fire; whose fan is in his hand, thoroughly to purge his [a]threshing-floor, and to gather the wheat into his garner; but the [b]chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.

With many other exhortations, therefore, preached he good tidings to the people. But [c]Herod the tetrarch being reproved by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evils that Herod had done, added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

3 (iii.21-38): Christ sealed with the Spirit; the renewal of man.

1 (21, 22): the First-born.

3. [1]And it came to pass, when all the people were baptized, and [d]Jesus also having been baptized and praying, that heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form as a [e]dove upon him; and a

u *cf.* Matt. 9. 10. *cf.* ch. 7. 29. *cf.* ch. 19. 8.
v *cf.* Jno. 18. 36. *cf.* 2 Cor. 10. 3–5.
w *cf.* Jno. 1. 19, 20. *cf.* Jno. 5. 33, 35. *cf.* Matt. 21. 26.
x Matt. 3. 11, 12. Mk. 1. 8. Jno. 1. 26, 33. Acts 1. 5. Acts 11. 16. *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 17.
y *cf.* 1 Cor. 12. 13.
z *cf.* Rev. 20. 9, 15. *cf.* Matt. 25. 41.
a Matt. 13. 30. *cf.* Mi. 4. 12, 13. *cf.* Is. 21. 10.
b *cf.* Ps. 1. 4. *cf.* Hos. 13. 3. *cf.* Heb. 6. 8.
c Matt. 14. 3, etc. Mk. 6. 17, etc. *cf.* Jno. 3. 24.

d Matt. 3. 13–17; Mk. 1. 9–11; Jno. 1. 31–34. e *cf.* Acts 10. 38; *cf.* Gen. 8. 8, 9.

John's is truly a solitary voice in a barren land. It is characteristic of Luke that what is addressed in Matthew to Pharisees and Sadducees is here to the people at large. They can no longer plead the privileges of children of Abraham. The axe is at the root of the trees; while on the other hand, God is able to raise such out of the very stones. To those who ask of him what they are to do, he prescribes no asceticism, but practical righteousness and love; while yet no claim upon God is allowed on this account. As the Lord says at an after-time, no such claim is possible for a creature: "when ye have done all say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which it was our duty to do."

2. But John does not end with this. The people, full of expectation, are reasoning in their hearts whether this might be the Christ; and this brings him out to disclaim entirely any such pretension. He is not fit to loose the shoe-latchet of Him who comes after him. *He* would baptize, not with water merely, but with the Holy Spirit and fire. He would purge His threshing-floor, separating between the wheat and the chaff: the one preserved for the garner, the other to be burnt up with unquenchable fire (*See notes on Matthew pp. 55, 56.*)

Luke passes on with this to John's imprisonment at the hands of Herod, and the occasion of it; the fore-runner precedes also in his suffering and death the Prince of sufferers.

3. The Father's voice is now heard owning His beloved Son, upon whom the Spirit descends out of the opened heaven, in bodily form like a dove. He is thus now in full reality the Christ, the Anointed; the Spirit of God finding a congenial habitation in a "Second Man," the First-born of a new family, from whom, however, the stream of blessing flows back also through the ages, so that Adam shall once more, though not as of the old creation, be the "son of God."

[1] The meaning of the Lord's baptism by John has been considered in Matthew. It was the pledge on His part to that other baptism unto death in which He met

voice came out of heaven, [saying]* [f]Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.

2 (23-38): Son of man and Second Man: the link of salvation.

2 And Jesus himself was beginning to be about [g]thirty years old; being, as was supposed, the son of [h]Joseph, of Heli, of Matthat, of Levi, of Melchi, of Jannai, of Joseph, of Mattathias, of Amos, of Naoum, of Esli, of Naggai, of Maath, of Mattathias, of Semein, of Josech, of Joda, of Joanan, of Rhesa, of Zorobabel, of Salathiel, of Neri, of Melchi, of Addi, of Cosam, of Elmadam, of Er, of Jesus, of Eliezer, of Joreim, of Matthat, of Levi, of Simeon, of Judah, of Joseph, of Jonan, of Eliakim, of Meleas, of Menna, of Mattatha, of [i]Nathan, of David, of Jesse, of Obed, of [j]Booz, of Salmon, of [k]Naasson, of Aminadab, of Aram, of Esrom, of Pharez, of Juda, of Jacob, of Isaac, of Abraham, of Terah, of Nahor, of Seruch, of Ragau, of Phalek, of Eber, of Sala, of Cainan, of Arphaxad, of [l]Sem, of Noe, of Lamech, of Methusala, of Enoch, of Jared, of Malaleel, of Cainan, of Enos, of Seth, of Adam, [m]of God.

4 (iv. 1-13): The testing in the wilderness. 1 (1-4): the true life of man.

4. [1] But Jesus, [n]full of the Holy Spirit, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness forty days, being tempted of the devil; and in those

* Many omit.

[f] *cf.* Is. 42.1. *cf.* ch. 9. 35. *cf.* Jno.8.29.
[g] *cf.* Num.4. 3. *cf.* Jno.8.57, 58.
[h] *cf.* Matt.1. 1-17.
[i] *cf.* Zech.12. 12. *cf.* 2 Sa.5.14. *cf.* 1 Chron. 3. 5.
[j] Ruth 4.18-22.
[k] *cf.* Nu.1.7.
[l] *cf.* 1 Chron. 1.1-4,24-28, 34. *cf.* 1 Chron. 2. 1-12.
[m] *cf.* Gen.5. 1, 2. *cf.* Num.16. 22.
[n] Matt. 4. 1. Mk.1.12,13.

the need of those who as sinners took their place in death their due. In Luke alone it is noticed that He is praying; which we may thus connect with His prayer in Gethsemane, and with Heb. v. 7. Thereon heaven opens, as in fact that death opened it, and the Spirit descends on Him in bodily form like a dove. The dove being the bird of sacrifice, Christ and the Spirit of Christ are One as seen in it, the First-born—man as presented by Christ in this new family—being wholly according to His mind. Thus the Voice from heaven owns Him: "Thou art My beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased."

So had the angels declared God's "good pleasure in men," as that which the Babe of Bethlehem bore witness to and justified. "Whom He foreknew He also fore-ordained to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the First-born among many brethren."

2 Thus a genealogy follows here traced backward, and not, as in Matthew, forward; and not to Abraham merely, as in Matthew, but to Adam. It is a genealogy, not of the King, (and so giving the legal title, the descent from David) but of the Son of *man*.

But what need of a genealogy in this case? If He be man, must He not be Son of man—of Adam? True; and so, as has been said, the stream runs backward. The Son of man is also the Second Man; and each link in the chain at least *suggests* a link of salvation. Thus the genealogy is not put in connection with His birth, but with that coming forward to be baptized of John in Jordan, which was His entrance upon His ministry of salvation; and He is then thirty years of age, the time of the commencement of Levite service.

Son of man as He is generically, Christ is no less Seed of the woman; and it is doubtless Mary's line that is given us here. Joseph is, as husband of Mary, the son of Heli. In the Gospel of the Manhood it is as naturally Mary who would be before us, as in the Gospel of the Kingship it would be Joseph; and the respective histories conform themselves to this.

4. [1] The temptation in the wilderness follows the public testimony of God to His Son. It is founded on it:—"If Thou be the Son of God"; and necessarily follows it. This is the divine order: for it would have been dishonor to both,

days he [o]ate nothing; and when they were finished, he hungered. And the devil said to him, If thou art Son of God, [p]speak to this stone that it may become bread. And Jesus answered him, It is [q]written that not by bread alone shall man live, [but by every word of God].*

2 (5-8): the Second Man and the Seed of the woman.

2 And the [r]devil, leading him up [into a high mountain],† showed him all the kingdoms of the habitable earth in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, I will give thee all this authority and the glory of them: for it is [s]delivered to me, and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship before me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said to him, It is [t]written, Thou shalt worship [the] Lord thy God, and serve him alone.

*Some omit. † Some omit, but evidently to be retained.

o Ex. 34.28. 1 Ki. 19.8. *ctr.* Gen. 2.15-17.
p *cf.* ch. 9.12-17. *cf.* Matt. 27.42.
q Deut. 8.3. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2.14.
r *ctr.* Ps. 2.8. *cf.* Jno. 17.4, 5.
s *cf.* Jno. 12.31. *cf.* Jno. 14.30. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4.4.
t Deut. 6.13. Deut. 10.20. *cf.* Rev. 13.12.

if God had waited to see if His Son could stand all tests before approving Him. On the other hand that approval was a challenge to the accuser, the Spirit leading Christ in the wilderness forty days, while Satan was permitted to assail Him. Fasting and hungry with the famine of those days upon Him, the devil appeals to Him, if He be the Son of God, to put forth His power and make bread of the stones which are around Him. Thus He would take Himself out of the place of dependence by using a power which had not been given to man. But the true life of man is not that which is sustained by bread but by the word of God. Obedience, dependence, communion, are its characteristics and its strength. Against one walking in such a path all the suggestions of the enemy are unavailing.

2 The second and third temptations are in reverse order in Matthew and Luke. The historical order seems to be that which is found in Matthew, the second being marked by "then" as following the first; while the third is marked as the closing one by the Lord's "Get thee hence, Satan," which lays bare and dismisses the tempter. Indeed the proposal here in its very nature seems to close the whole matter. Yet there must, of course, be a reason for the change in order here, and that whether we are able or not to discover it; the limit of our knowledge is not that of the word of God which He has given us.

The first answer of the Lord to Satan has shown us man in the true life of dependent obedience for which he was created. Than such a life there could be nothing freer, nothing happier, nothing nobler. Living such a life, the world was his, and all was subjected to him as the image of his Maker. Aspiring to independency he lost it all, and became, by the lusts through which he governed him, Satan's poor drudge and bondsman. This is the empire of which the devil boasts now to the Lord; spreading it before Him in a moment, as if to dazzle Him with it. But all this authority and the glory of earth's kingdoms he whose it now was would give Him, if He would do homage for it.

The dragon has in this way, in the book of Revelation, the heads and horns of the last world-empire: he is the spirit of it, the "prince of this world" (Rev. xii. 3). Later, he is giving authority to the beast,—"the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority" (xiii. 2). His terms have been always similar, and the children of the fallen first man have been constantly repeating their father's forfeiture of his birthright freedom.

But the Second Man is now come, the Seed of the woman, who is to bruise the serpent's head; and the conflict is already begun in victory. The prince of this world finds nothing in Him who is here not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. To such an one he can present no motive that has force. The strong man is bound.

3 (9-13): Messiah, and God's fulfilment.

3 And he led him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the [u]pinnacle of the temple, and said unto him, If thou be Son of God, cast thyself down from hence: for it is [v]written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee to guard thee, and, on their hands they shall bear thee up, lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone. And Jesus answered and said to him, It is said, [w]Thou shalt not tempt [the] Lord thy God. And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he [z]departed from him for a season.

u *cf.* Ps.27.4. *cf.* Mk. 11. 11. *cf.* Matt.16. 1.
v Ps. 91. 11, 12. *cf.* 2 Cor.4.2.
w Deut.6.16. *cf.* Ps.19.13.
x *cf.* Matt. 16. 21-23. *cf.* Jno. 14. 30. *cf.* ch.22.53.

[3] The temptation by the word of God itself comes last therefore: it is all that remains. He cannot be seduced *from* it; can it be so presented as that He should be seduced *by* it? We have already looked at this in Matthew, and seen how it necessarily involved the perversion of the Word, and this by the impatience for the fulfilment of it which would take it out of God's hand instead of leaving Him to fulfil it in His own way. This impatience is only distrust, and to act upon it is to tempt the Lord our God. We are seeking an easier path than His, as if His wisdom had failed, or His power were insufficient for the difficulties of the way. Whereas to "wait on the Lord" is to "spring up with wings as eagles;" it is to "run and not be weary," and to "walk and not faint" (Isa. xl. 31).

The devil has now ended all the temptation, and departs, but only "for a season." He will return as "prince of this world" (John xiv. 30), with the men of this world behind him, to show the sad reality of that dominion over them which he has vaunted, and to gain an apparent victory which will be in the end his complete overthrow.

Div. 2.

The division of Mark and Luke is very similar. We shall find also that of John to correspond essentially. First, we have the Lord presented to us personally, in that character which the particular Gospel exhibits; then His work in active ministry among men; and finally the sacrificial work and its results. Here, as Man, and in the nearness implied by this, the former Gospels having shown us atonement in its full substitutionary character wrought out, as in the sin- and trespass-offering, we find in the second division the salvation so accomplished ministered to men in a way we could not have had before. Not that the fulness of what is in John is reached. The truths of new birth, eternal life, the gift of the Spirit, and other things, are lacking, as John (or the Lord in John's Gospel) shows them to us. There is an approach made to these; God and man meet together; the prodigal is in the Father's house; the fatted calf is on the table: things which have made some of old to suppose—with the known relationship of Luke to Paul—that it was this Gospel which Paul called his own (Rom. xvi. 25). This goes too far, but the doctrinal connection is yet evident. We shall have many opportunities of realizing this.

Subd. 1.

The sovereignty of grace in salvation is the very first thing presented here. God alone could have thought of it: from His heart alone it could have come. Even so, and with all the suitability there is in it to man's condition, it is naturally distasteful to him, for he believes in himself, and does not willingly own the truth of his condition. Hence God must act for Himself as is implied in new birth: for who was ever born of his own will? And Scripture directly negatives this as to spiritual birth (John i. 13).

But thus salvation being of God is effected from first to last in the power of God. How great a comfort for the soul convicted of its own evil, folly and feebleness? God "worketh in you the willing and the doing of His good pleasure" (Phil. ii. 13, *Gk.*). The work *in* us is secured by the same grace

DIVISION 2. (Chaps. iv. 14–xix. 27.)

Salvation.

SUBDIVISION 1. (Chaps. iv. 14–vi. 49.)

In sovereign grace, and divine power.

1 (iv. 14-30): The foreshadow.
1 (14-21): the Source of blessing.

1. [1] AND Jesus [y]returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee; and a [z]fame went out concerning him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. And he [a]came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and he entered, as his [b]custom was, into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up to read. And there was delivered to him the book of the prophet Esaias. And he opened the book, and found the place where it was [c]written: [d]The Spirit of [the] Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the [e]poor: he hath sent me* to proclaim [f]release to captives, and recovery of [g]sight to the blind, to set at [h]liberty those that are bruised, to proclaim the [i]acceptable year of [the] Lord. And when he had [j]rolled up the book, and delivered it again to the attendant, he sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened upon him. And he began to say unto them, To-day is this scripture [k]fulfilled in your ears.

* Many copies have "to heal the broken-hearted," as in Isaiah.

y ver. 1. Matt. 4. 12. Mk. 1. 14. *cf.* Jno. 4. 43.
z Matt. 4. 24.
a Matt. 13. 54-58. Mk. 6. 1-5.
b ver. 15. Mk. 1. 21. *cf.* Acts 13. 14, 15.
c Is. 61. 1-3.
d *cf.* ch. 3. 21, 22. *cf.* vers. 1. 14. Acts 10. 38.
e *cf.* Matt. 11. 5. *cf.* ch. 1. 53.
f *cf.* Is. 42. 6, 7. *cf.* Jno. 8. 32-36. *cf.* Rom. 8. 2.
g *cf.* Jno. 9. 1-3, 39. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 4, 6.
h *cf.* Ex. 21. 26. *cf.* ch. 13. 11-16.
i *cf.* Lev. 25. 9, 10. *cf.* Is. 63. 4. *cf.* Is. 61. 2 with Mi. 7, 18.
j *cf.* Rev. 4. 1-5. *cf.* Rev. 10. -17.
k *cf.* ch. 2. 10, 11.

that has accomplished the work *for* us, in the value of which we stand unchangeably. All is provided for equally, the covenant of promise being God's "I will" throughout.

1. [1] This part begins with a foreshadow at Nazareth of what is soon to be fulfilled in Israel's history. The Lord is seen in the place where He was brought, up and according to His custom He enters the synagogue on the sabbath day. There He stands up to read, and the book of Isaiah being given Him, He opens at the sixty-first chapter, and applies the words of the Man anointed with the Spirit of Jehovah to Himself. It is clear how accordant with the character of Luke the quotation is. It is the "Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. ii. 5), whose voice is heard here; and it is as come up out of Jordan, where He has pledged Himself to a baptism to death far different, that the Spirit has come upon Him for His work. He declares here in the first words of His ministry, as Luke gives it to us, the purport of that anointing. The preaching of glad tidings to the poor comes first, and gives character to all the rest. When man is in the place of need he can receive the gospel. When he is consciously a sinner, captive to the sin which he cannot, when he will, renounce, the gospel brings him release. The blind receive their sight. Those bruised in fetters liberty.* It is in fact "the acceptable year of the Lord"; the jubilee of God; fuller and more blessed than the law ever proclaimed in Israel.

Now in His Person this had come to them. He was the source of all, the spring of grace and salvation. Where the prophet goes on to "the day of vengeance of our God," the Lord stops short in the middle of the sentence: grace

* This is not in chap. lxi., as the rest is, but inserted from chap. lviii. 6. It is there found in very different connection, and here is so similar to what we have had already, that it would arouse suspicion as to its being really part of the text; but the copies are in agreement.

2 (22-30): grace rejected will go out to others.

22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the [l] gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this the son of [m] Joseph? And he said unto them, Ye will surely say to me this parable, [n] Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard of as done at [o] Capernaum, do also here in thine own country. And he said, Verily I say unto you that [p] no prophet is acceptable in his own country. But of a truth I say unto you, Many widows were in Israel in the [q] days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, so that there came a great famine over all the land; and unto none of them was Elias sent, save to Sarepta of [r] Sidonia, unto a woman that was a widow. And many [s] lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.

l *cf.* Ps.45.2. *cf.* Jno.7.46.
m Jno. 6.42. Jno. 7. 41, 52.
n *cf.* Rom.2. 21, 22.
o *cf.* 1Thess. 1. 8. *cf.* 2 Cor. 8. 1, etc.
p Jno. 4. 44. *cf.* Jno.1.11.
q 1 Ki. 17.9, etc. 1 Ki. 18. 1.
r *cf.* Matt. 11. 21, 22. *cf.* Matt.15. 21-28.
s 2 Ki. 5. 1, etc. *cf.* Matt. 8. 10.

had hastened to anticipate the judgment; although for those who refuse the one there will at last be the other. But judgment lingers with reluctant feet, while those of grace are winged with desire.

22 They heard and wondered: could not but own that these were gracious words. Would they receive them, then? That is a very different thing. *They* were not the poor, the captive, blind or fetter-bruised. They were wonderful words indeed of Joseph's son! How had He learned this wisdom? and how had He the boldness to take such a place as He was taking? After all, the question was of Him and not of them. Who was He? But they had heard of miracles wrought at Capernaum: let the physician heal himself; what they had heard of elsewhere let Him repeat in His own city, to which His wonders naturally belonged, and the fame of the prophet. For it had become a proverb that out of Galilee there arose none; and as to Nazareth it was a question, could any good be expected of it? Well, if He had such power, let Him exercise it there where there was need and the occasion called.

After all, with all the unbelief that might be in it, it seems natural to ask, why the Lord did not take this means of breaking down their unbelief; why, if He were doing miracles elsewhere, why not here?

But He, seeing more deeply, sees He is rejected. Even while they wonder at His gracious words, they have no need of them: and of what use were miracles, save to confirm that of which they had no need?

It was a case, too, coming under a rule which—so alike are men, so inveterate the evil in them—could be deemed invariable. "No prophet is acceptable in his own country." And this seems as if it were a comment upon their question, "Is not this the son of Joseph?" God acting in a son of Joseph! God speaking with so familiar a voice, and disguising Himself so in nature and common life! That seems impossible; self-contradictory even; startling too by bringing God so near; unwelcome, alas, in the same proportion.

But, however men judge of it, God will be as God, acting sovereignly as He pleases, while in goodness, because goodness is His nature, but not tied to show it according to any of the thoughts of men. What had their history shown as to this? In the awful times of Elijah, when for their sins famine swept through the land for three years and six months;—or in times succeeding, when Elisha was in Elijah's place:—who were they to whom it pleased God to show mercy? There were many widows in Israel, when Elijah was sent to the Sidonian widow! many lepers in Israel unhealed, when Naaman the Syrian was cleansed! Israel might in those days have said to Elijah, "Do these things in thine own country," while yet they had shown no desire after God, but had cast Him off; and now grace rejected might go out to others. There were the poor, the blind,

28 And all in the synagogue were filled with [t]wrath
when they heard these things; and rising up they cast
him out of the city, and led him as far as the brow of
the hill on which their city was built, so that they
might [u]throw him down headlong. But he, passing
through the midst of them, [v]went his way.

2 (iv.31-44): Salvation from the enemy.

1 (31-37): "with authority and power."

2. 1 And he [w]went down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee;
and he was teaching them on the sabbaths; and they
were [x]astonished at his teaching, for his word was with
authority. And in the [y]synagogue there was a man
who had a spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out
with a loud voice, Let be! [z]what have we to do with
thee, Jesus, Nazarene? Art thou come to destroy us?
I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And
Jesus rebuked him, saying, [a]Hold thy peace, and come
out of him. And the demon, having thrown him down
in the midst, came out of him, and did him no hurt.
And [b]amazement came upon all, and they spake one
to another, saying, What a word is this! for with [c]au-
thority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits,
and they come out. And there went out a [d]rumor
concerning him into all the region round about.

2 (38, 39): disease.

2 And, rising up out of the synagogue, he entered into
the [e]house of Simon. Now Simon's mother-in-law was
holden with a [f]great fever; and they asked him for her.
And, standing over her, he rebuked the fever, and it
left her; and straightway she rose up and [g]ministered
to them.

t *cf.* Acts 13. 45–50. *cf.* Acts 22. 21, 22.
u *cf.* Jno. 8. 37. *cf.* Jno. 15. 24, 25. *cf.* I Thess. 2. 15, 16.
v *cf.* Jno. 8. 59. *cf.* Jno. 10. 39. *cf.* Jno. 7. 30. *ctr.* vers. 9–12.
w Matt. 4. 13. Mk. 1. 21. *cf.* Jno. 2. 12.
x Matt. 7. 28, 29. Matt. 13. 54.
y Mk. 1. 23–27.
z Matt. 8. 29. *cf.* Jas. 2. 19.
a Mk. 1. 34. Mk. 3. 11, 12. *cf.* Acts 16. 16–18.
b ch. 5. 26.
c Matt. 12. 29.
d vers. 14, 15. *cf.* Mk. 1. 45.
e Matt. 8. 14, 15. Mk. 1. 29–31.
f *cf.* Is. 1. 5.
g *cf.* ch. 8. 2, 3. *cf.* Gal. 1. 23.

the captives of sin elsewhere,—even among the Gentiles: men who had need of Him, if they had none; and who, finding that need met in Him, would realize in Him more than "the son of Joseph."

But the men of Nazareth are only roused into fury by such words. They seek to kill Him by hurling Him from the brow of the hill on which the city is built; but He passes through the midst of them and goes His way. How plain a foreshadow of the rejection that waited Him at the hands of the people, and of the way in which the death to which they destined Him availed nothing to hinder those purposes for which He stooped even to death also. And so grace went out to the Gentiles.

2. [1] We have had, then, Christ as the Source of blessing, and the character of the blessing which He is come to convey to men. But if blessing be thus prepared for him, the enemy in whose hand he is must be met and despoiled of his prey. This, therefore, is what we find next, the story which we have already had in Mark (i. 21–28), of the demoniac in the synagogue at Capernaum. Very significant it is that the demon is not here in the tombs or in the mountains, but parading his victim in the midst of the concourse of men, and even in the synagogue, as if he would make good his title to him in the presence of God Himself. But under the power of the Word, which is the sword of the Spirit to expose and vanquish him, he is made to realize the Holy One of God, and quails as before his destroyer. He is silenced and made to come out, with one last expression of impotent rage, which only manifests the more the power over him; and amazement seizes upon the multitude who behold it, and spread His fame throughout the region round about.

[2] He enters into Simon Peter's house and the devil's power meets Him in another form. The mother-in-law of Simon is ill with a great fever. He re-

3 (40-44): the manifestation.

[3] And when the [h]sun was setting, all those that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them to him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. And demons also went out of many, crying out and saying, Thou art the Son of God. And [i]rebuking them, he suffered them not to speak, for they knew that he was the Christ.

And [j]when it was day, he went out, and went into a desert place; and the multitudes sought after him, and came unto him, and would have [k]stayed him that he should not go from them. But he said unto them, I must preach the good tidings of the kingdom of God to the [l]other cities also: for therefore was I sent. And he was preaching in the [m]synagogues of Galilee.

3 (v. 1-26): Sanctification; and Christ the Sanctifier.

1 (1-11): conviction.

3. [1] Now it [n]came to pass while the multitude pressed on him and were hearing the word of God, that he stood by the lake of Gennesaret: and he saw two ships standing by the lake; but the fishermen had come down from them and were washing their nets. And entering into one of the ships which was Simon's, he asked him to draw off a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the multitudes [o]out of the ship. And when he had finished speaking, he said unto Simon, Draw out now into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answered and said to him, Master, we have [p]toiled all the night and have taken nothing; but at [q]thy word I will let down the nets. And

h Matt.8.16, 17. Mk. 1. 32-34.

i ver. 35.

j Mk. 1. 35-39.

k *ctr.* ch. 8. 37.

l *cf.* Matt. 11. 1.

m *cf.*ver.16.

n Matt. 4.18 -22. Mk. 1. 16-20.

o *cf.* Matt. 13. 1, 2. *cf.*Matt.5.1. *cf.* Mk. 11. 11.

p *cf.*Jno. 21. 3, etc.

q *cf.* Matt.8. 8. *cf.*Jno. 4.50 -53.

bukes it, and it leaves her; and immediately she is restored and able to minister to them.

[3] And now the crowds gather, bringing those sick with all manner of diseases; and the power of God is manifest in healing all without exception. Nothing is too hard for Him. The earth is ready to put on again its paradisaic garb, and the devil to be banished out of it: so at least it well might seem.

There is love also equal to the power displayed. The people, well content to have such an one among them, would fain prevent His leaving them; but it is not enough for Him that seekers should find Him, He must be the Seeker, and seek everywhere the sheep that are astray from their Shepherd. All the cities of Israel must hear the Voice of Him that is come after them. The Kingdom of God must be everywhere proclaimed. That which men most coveted, the miracles of healing, were but the attendant signs of divine authority once more ready to be openly established over a willing-hearted people. Thus alone could there be healing indeed.

3. Naturally we are led on in this way to the inward deliverance, the spiritual healing by which sanctification to God is attained. This we shall find commonly conveyed to us, as so often in the Gospels, in terms of the outward miracle, the clearest and most concise way, no doubt, in which it could be done in these cases. Figures though they are, the Christian understanding can hardly fail to realize their significance.

[1] The first story here, though from its conclusion surely coincident with the call of the first disciples in the previous Gospels, is yet in the main part peculiar to Luke, as it is surely in fullest harmony with its character. It is the record of a soul brought into the presence of God; at once drawn and searched out by the light of it. There is nothing in the nature of the miracle itself that is in the least calculated to terrify or produce any emotion of fear whatever, but

when they had done this they enclosed a great multitude of fishes, and their nets were [r]breaking; and they beckoned to their partners in the other ship that they should come and help them. And they came and filled both the ships, so that they began to [s]sink. Now, when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, [t]Depart from me: for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was amazed, and all that were with him, at the draught of fishes which they had taken: and so were also James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, [u]Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their ships to land, they [v]left all, and followed him.

2 (12-16): the leper: corruption of sin.

2 And it came to pass, while he was in one of the cities, behold, [there was] a man full of [w]leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And he stretched forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou cleansed. And immedi-

r *cf.* vers.36-39. *ctr.* Jno.21. 11. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 16.
s *cf.* ver. 6.
t *cf.* Is. 6. 5. *cf.* Gen. 28. 16, 17.
u *cf.* Matt.8. 26. *cf.* Acts 26. 16.
v *cf.* Matt. 19. 27. *cf.* Phil. 3. 8.
w Matt.8.2-4. Mk. 1. 40-45. Lev. chs. 13 and 14.

the contrary. They who have toiled all night and caught nothing, find now, upon casting their nets once more at the Lord's bidding, a multitude of fish which fill their own and their partners' vessels till they are ready to sink with the weight. When Simon sees it he is amazed; and falling down at Jesus' knees, he cries, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

It is the sense of the divine presence, revealed by the miracle, that has stricken through Simon Peter, and brought him to the consciousness of his condition. He cleaves to Him, even while he says, depart. Conscience and heart are at strife within him. But he does not flee: how should he flee from Him who is what he realizes Him to be—who has searched out the paths of the sea and his heart together? Nor does the Lord leave him in doubt as to the grace that can take up the sinful: "Fear not," He says to Simon; "from henceforth thou shalt catch men." The grace thus shown is not simply the reception of sinners. Christ thus known in the heart associates the redeemed with Himself in His message of mercy to men.

2 In the two miracles following, the need that is to be ministered to is more fully exposed. The leper and the paralytic show us the corruption and impotence produced by sin; the former being the well-known type of sin in the Old Testament, in its subtle invasion, its certain spread, its contagion, its breaking up of human relations, its banishment from God (Lev. xiii.) Man was powerless in the presence of this malignant scourge. The mere touch of one who had it was defilement. Every leper was known, and had to make himself known to all around him, that none might come in contact with him. Moreover the removal of it was one of the signs by which was proclaimed the God-sent deliverer of Israel from the oppression of the Egyptians.

Nowhere then could there be found a more suitable means for the manifestation of His power than in cleansing the leper; and here was one in that awful state of isolation, "a man full of leprosy." This is Luke's description, going beyond the former Gospels: it was not in mere incipiency, but revealing itself in all its terrible reality. But "when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and besought Him, saying, Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean."

A sorrowful case when one who confesses the power of Jesus to heal him, can doubt His will; and yet, in the case of sin how common! But the Lord would have none question. He does not merely speak, He goes further, and with a touch at once breaks through the barrier of law, and removes that which the

ately the leprosy departed from him. And he [x]charged him to tell no one: but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing as Moses commanded, for a testimony to them. But so much the more went there abroad the word concerning him; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed of their infirmities. But he [y]withdrew himself in the deserts and prayed.

3 (17–26): the paralytic: strength renewed, and divine glory manifested.

[3] And it came to pass in one of those days that he was teaching, and there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, who were come out of every village of Galilee and Judea, and from Jerusalem; and power of [the] Lord was there to heal them. And lo, men [z]bringing upon a couch a man who was paralyzed; and they sought to bring him in, and put him before him. And not finding what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went up upon the housetop, and [a]let him down through the tiles with his pallet into the midst before Jesus. And seeing their faith, he said, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the scribes and Pharisees began to reason, saying, [b]Who is this that speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone? But Jesus, knowing their reasonings, answered and said unto them, Why reason ye in your hearts? Which is easier, to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk? But that ye may [c]know that the Son of man hath authority upon earth to forgive sins (he said to the paralyzed man), I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy pallet, and go to thy house. And straightway he rose up before them, took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his house, [d]glorifying God. And amazement took hold upon all, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen [e]strange things to-day.

x *cf.* ch. 8. 56.

y Matt. 14. 23. Mk. 6. 46. ch. 11. 1.

z Matt. 9. 2–8. Mk. 2. 3–12.

a *cf.* ch. 18. 39.

b *cf.* ch. 7. 49.

c *cf.* Acts 2. 22. *cf.* Mk. 16. 17.

d *cf.* Acts 3. 8. *cf.* ch. 17. 15, 16.

e Mk. 7. 37.

law could only brand, not remedy. "I will: be thou cleansed." And immediately the leprosy has departed from him. Now the very priest of the law must pronounce him clean, and Jesus sends the healed man to him for that purpose.

Leprosy speaks of the out-break of the flesh,—the nature of the unrenewed man; but which remains in the renewed man also, and may, alas, break out of him. This last is, in fact, what the type in Leviticus directly speaks of, while leprosy in itself may speak of either. Christ is, in either case, the only and all-sufficient remedy. In John xiii. He takes our feet into His blessed hands to cleanse them from all the defilements of the way, and this is the touch of Jesus for the Christian. For the sinner also there is the touch of the Samaritan-Saviour, come where he is; of which Luke will tell us much at another time: a story which unites in some sense the leper with the paralytic in him who fell among the thieves. The aspects vary of that which is fundamentally the same: the meeting of divine power and love with human need and guilt. The experience of how many can interpret and apply a history like this.

[3] We pass on to the paralytic, in whom the impotence produced by sin is clearly shown us. The Lord, therefore, first assures him of forgiveness—"Thy sins are forgiven thee," and makes the power to "rise and walk" the token to others of the reality of what he has received. And this is the spiritual order.

4 (v. 27-vi. 11): The change involved.
1 (v. 27-32): the call of Levi.

4. [1] And after these things he went forth and saw a [f]tax-gatherer, Levi by name, sitting at the tax-office, and said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him. And Levi made a great [g]entertainment* for him at his house; and there was a great multitude of tax-gatherers and others who sat down with them. And the Pharisees and their scribes murmured at his disciples, saying, Why do ye [h]eat and drink with tax-gatherers and sinners? And Jesus answered and said unto them, They that are [i]whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous but [j]sinners to repentance.

2 (33-39): the old and the new.

[2] And they said unto him, The† disciples of John [k]fast often and make supplications, and likewise those of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink. But Jesus said unto them, Can ye make the sons of the bride-chamber fast, while the [l]bridegroom is with them? but days will come when the bridegroom shall be [m]taken away from them: then shall they fast in those days.

f Matt. 9. 9. Mk. 2. 14. cf. Gal. 1. 15. ctr. Matt. 22. 5.
g Matt. 9. 10-13. Mk. 2. 15-17.
h cf. ch. 15. 1, 2. cf. ch. 7. 34.
i cf. John 9. 41. cf. ch. 18. 9-14.
j 1 Tim. 1. 15.
k Matt. 9. 14-17. Mk. 2. 18-22. cf. ch. 7. 33.
l cf. John 3. 29. cf. Song 7. 10. cf. Ps. 45. 9, etc.
m cf. Jno. 16. 6, 20 cf. John. 20. 11-15.

* Literally "reception." † Many read, "Why do."

Both this and the previous miracle we have had in the first two Gospels, and in Mark, as here, together. In Matthew they are separated, but with as distinct a purpose as to each. The divine glory of Christ in all this part is fully manifest.

4. We have now what with little variation is common to the three Synoptists, the dispensational change which this open display of divine grace involves. Matthew indeed puts an interval between that which takes place at Levi's house and the contention as to the Sabbath; while Mark and Luke present them in connection. The *call* of Matthew (or Levi) seems also historically to have been some time before the feast made by him. Each evangelist uses his material according to his purpose, rather than in mere chronological order. The connection between the Sabbath question and the displacement of the legal ritual which was impending is evident, and so it is that they are brought together here.

[1] The call of Levi to the apostleship must have been startling to a Jew. The tax-gatherer was hated as the symbol of foreign dominion, hated for his often unscrupulous exactions, and hated more than all if (as was here the case) it was a Jew who lent himself to what was considered the oppression of his own people. But "tax-gatherers and sinners," thus associated in the language of the multitude, followed the Baptist, while Pharisees and Sadducees turned away from him; and so was it now in the Lord's case. Levi follows Him with unhesitating promptitude, leaving all he had. And the feast that he makes Him is furnished with guests which show how fully he has entered into his Master's mind.

But the scribes and Pharisees as naturally murmur: why eat and drink, they ask, with such as these? The Lord's answer is as simple as can be, and as sufficient. He is a physician looking for the sick; and not, therefore, as disregarding the need men had of repentance, but to bring them to it. It is the goodness of God known that brings men to it.

[2] Then they raise a question about fasting. John's disciples fasted; as, with the message that he brought the people, well was there need. The Pharisees too had not been wrong in this, if only they had penetrated the true meaning of the law, which John had but emphasized. The voice in the wilderness had

And he spake also a parable to them: No one putteth a piece of a [n]new garment upon an old garment: otherwise he will both rend the new, and the piece which is from the new will not [o]agree with the old. And no one putteth [p]new wine into old skins: otherwise the new wine will burst the skins, and the wine be poured out and the skins destroyed; but new wine is to be put into [q]new skins, and both are preserved. And no one having drunk [r]old wine [immediately]* desireth new: for he saith, The old is good.†

3 (vi.1-11): sabbath sanctification. *a* (1-5): the Lord of the sabbath.

3 *a* And it came to pass on the [second-first]‡ sabbath that he went through [s]corn-fields; and his disciples were plucking the ears and eating, rubbing them in their hands. And some of the Pharisees said: Why do ye that which is not [t]lawful upon the Sabbath-day? And Jesus answering said to them: Have ye never read this, what [u]David did when he was hungry,—himself, and those who were with him? how he went into the house of God, and took and ate the show-bread, and gave also to those that were with him, which it is not [v]lawful to eat, save for the priests alone? And he said unto them, The Son of man is [w]Lord also of the sabbath.

n cf. 2 Cor. 5. 17. *cf.* Gal. 2. 20, 21. *cf.* Eph. 4. 22-24.
o cf. Rom. 11. 6. *cf.* Ruth 4. 6.
p cf. Rom. 14. 17. *cf.* Col. 1. 29.
q cf. Jno. 3. 6. *cf.* Gal. 6. 15.
r cf. Heb. 8. 13. *cf.* Heb. 9. 9, 10.
s Matt. 12. 1-9. Mk. 2. 23-28. Deut. 23. 25.
t cf. ch. 14. 1-6. *cf.* Jno. 5. 9, 10.
u 1 Sam. 21. 1-6.
v cf. Lev. 24. 5-9.
w cf. ch. 5. 24. *cf.* Jno. 5. 17, 18.

* Some omit. † Some have "better."
‡ Many omit "second-first," and the meaning is disputed. The term is not found elsewhere, either in Scripture or amongst Jewish writers.

announced however the coming of One who would be the Bridegroom of His people (John iii. 29): how unsuitable would be the voice of mourning then!

But of this the dead ritualism of the Pharisee knew nothing. Fasting was meritorious in itself according to their thought, and Christ in the truth of what He was had no place in them. Thus Israel's Bridegroom, already in their midst, would, as rejected, be taken from them; and then indeed would the sons of the bride-chamber fast.*

But there was another thing, for the old covenant points beyond itself, and that which was peculiar to it was therefore destined to pass away and be replaced by the new. So opposite were these that the two could not agree. The garment of human righteousness according to the law, however incompetent it might be, could not be patched with the "righteousness which is of God through faith" (Phil. iii. 9). The old wine-skins of the Jewish institutions could not confine the free expansive spirit of the new covenant which was already showing itself. But the opposition to it showed also that with man naturally the law was more to his taste: he who was still drinking of the old wine would not immediately desire the new.

3 The two incidents which raise the question of the Sabbath are given in almost precisely the same way in the three Gospels. In Matthew they are in different connections from those in which they are found in Mark and Luke; but in all their purport is the same: Christ the Lord of the Sabbath being rejected, they can claim no Sabbath; just as when, David the anointed king of Israel being a fugitive from the wrath of Saul, the show-bread became common food. Alas, Israel in a little while would keep their Sabbath with the Lord of it, crucified at their hands, lying in His guarded grave!

And at all times had mere ritualism lost the spirit of the law while retaining

* There is no thought of Christianity proper, or the Church, in all this. The Church is the *heavenly* bride, but of this the Baptist had no knowledge; nor did it form part of the Lord's teaching in the Gospels, but remained for the Spirit to bring out after His coming (John xvi. 12, 13). The Lord's words and those of the Baptist are in the line of Old Testament thought.

b (6-11: to save or destroy.

b And it came to pass on [x]another sabbath that he entered into the synagogue and taught. And there was a man there, and his right hand was [y]withered And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath-day: that they might find wherewith to [z]accuse him. But he [a]knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, Rise and stand in the midst: and he rose and stood. And Jesus said unto them, I ask you if it is lawful on the sabbath to do good or to do evil? to save life or destroy it. And having looked round upon them all, he said unto him, [b]Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so; and his hand was restored. But they were filled with madness,* and [c]spake to one another what they might do to Jesus.

5 (vi.12-49): Responsibilities and rewards of those that are with Him.

1 (12-19): Christ the source of authority and centre of power.

5. [1] And it came to pass in those days that he went out into the mountain to [d]pray; and he continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he [e]called his disciples to him. And of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles: Simon, whom he also named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James, and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, James [the son] of Alphæus, and Simon who was called [the] Zealot, and Judas [the brother] of James, and Judas Iscariot who became the traitor. And

x Matt. 12.9-13. Mk. 3. 1-5. *cf.* ch. 13.11-17.
y *cf.* Rom. 8. 3. *cf.* Ezek. 37. 11.
z *cf.* ch. 20. 20.
a *cf.* Jno. 2. 25. *cf.* Jno. 6. 64.
b *cf.* Jno. 4. 50. *cf.* Jno. 9. 6, 7.
c *cf.* Jno. 5. 18. *cf.* Jno. 15. 22-25.
d ch. 5. 16. Matt. 14. 23.
e Matt. 10. 1-4. Mk. 3. 13-19. *cf.* Jno. 1. 40-51. *cf.* Acts 1. 13.

* Literally, "unreasoning fury."

the form of it. The love to man which the seventh day rest breathed had passed into a rigid exaction which rather slew than saved. In the story of the withered hand this is fully manifest, and in the miracle which is wrought, the Lord brings in the power of God to bear witness against it. But the Pharisees and scribes are only the more roused to madness, and commune one with another what they might do to Jesus.

5. Thus He is more distinctly than before rejected of Israel in the persons of their leaders, and takes His place as such. In answer to their attitude He gathers His disciples round Him, and chooses from them twelve as His "apostles," or "sent ones," to be the witnesses and heralds of the new Kingdom coming in. In their presence and that of a great multitude as well of His disciples as of those from all the country round about attracted by His power and grace, He declares the blessedness, responsibilities, and recompence of those that cleave to Him, the heirs of the Kingdom. They are in a scene characterized by His rejection, and sufferers for His sake, only thus the more blessed, not the less. The end would declare it.

What we have here is, no doubt, "the sermon on the mount," but with abridgment as well as additions, according to Luke's purpose. The remnant character of those that are with Him is very strongly emphasized.

[1] Christ is here the source of authority and the centre of power. As He had already told the people of Nazareth, grace will not be stopped in its outflow by the opposition of men. "The Man Christ Jesus," Himself the expression of eternal counsels, in the sweet dependence of perfect humanity, and the perfect intimacy of the Son with the Father, goes up to God upon the mountain, and continues there all night in prayer to God. It is the anticipation of the place He has now taken, and all that follows is the fruit of that intercession. But thus the wisdom of God which is in it appears in the form of human weakness. He names the twelve, and among them is a traitor. The rest are fishermen and

he descended with them, and stood on a level place, and a great multitude of his disciples, and a [f]great number of people from all Judea, and Jerusalem, and the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; and those that were beset with unclean spirits were healed. And all the multitude sought to [g]touch him: for power came forth from him and healed them all.

2 (20-26): the separation of His disciples, and contrast in blessing or woe.

[2] And he, lifting up his eyes upon his disciples, said, [h]Blessed are ye [i]poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that [j]hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that [k]weep now: for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye when men shall [l]hate you, and when they shall separate you from them, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil for the Son of man's sake. [m]Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy: for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for in the same manner did their fathers to the [n]prophets. But [o]woe unto you that are rich: for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are [p]filled: for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that [q]laugh now: for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you when all men shall [r]speak well of you: for in the [s]same manner did their fathers unto the false prophets.

3 (27-31): the return of good for evil.

[3] But I say unto you that hear, [t]Love your enemies; do good to those that hate you; [u]bless those that curse you; [v]pray for those that despitefully use you. To

[f] Matt. 4.25. Mk. 3. 7, 8.
[g] Matt. 14. 36. Mk. 5. 28-30.
[h] Matt. 5.1-12.
[i] Matt. 11.5.
[j] ch. 1. 53.
[k] cf. 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7.
[l] Jno. 16.1-3.
[m] cf. Acts 5. 41.
[n] cf. Acts 7. 52.
[o] cf. Jas. 5.1. cf. 1 Tim. 6. 9.
[p] cf. ch. 12.15-21.
[q] cf. Prov. 1. 24-28.
[r] cf. Jno. 15. 19.
[s] cf. 1 Ki. 22. 6-8.
[t] ver. 35. Matt. 5. 43, 44. Rom. 12. 20.
[u] Rom. 12. 14. cf. 1 Cor. 4. 12.
[v] cf. ch. 23. 34, 35. cf. Acts 7. 60.

what not; not a sign among them of what naturally we should take for power; and the three most prominent, frequently made so, as it would seem, by their lack of apprehension of His mind and fellowship with Him. We see plainly that without Him they can do nothing. He is all of wisdom to them, all of power. They, like the crowd that swarm to Him from the regions round, are joined to Him by their absolute need of Him, their entire dependence on Him. A Judas even must serve Him. How we see the Christianity that is to spring out of this! *The whole of Christianity is Christ:* "Christ is all and in all" (Col. iii. 11).

[2] We see this strikingly in what follows here, in which His disciples are separated from all the world about them by this fact, that they are His. The world is in opposition to Him and to His. It hates them, separates them from it, casts out their name as evil for the Son of man's sake. Thus for them it has nothing. They are the "poor," the hungry, the weepers, the afflicted in it. Yet well may they rejoice: for their reward is great in heaven; on earth they but continue the line of the prophets rejected by the world from of old.

On the other hand, and for the same reason, those who are satisfied with it, and the world with them, have their part in the woes that are coming on the world. And He cannot leave this to inference, for He is the Saviour of sinners and His heart goes after them: in its very denunciations grace overflows. But this changes nothing as to the final end: rather does it assure us how fixed and unalterable that end must be.

[3] But the Lord goes on to speak of what the conduct of His disciples is to be in the midst af a world in opposition to them. To those whose ears are open to His words He says, "Love your enemies; do good to those that hate you; bless those that curse you; pray for those that despitefully use you." This rule of returning good for evil is that which He has so bountifully illustrated in His own person, and of which the Cross is the supreme example. The precept of

him that [w]smiteth thee upon the cheek, offer also the other; and to him that [x]taketh away thy cloak forbid not thy coat also. [y]Give to every one that asketh thee; and from him that taketh away thy goods ask them not back. And [z]as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

4 (32-35): tested by the way of the world.

[4] And [a]if ye love them that love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to those that do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do the same. And if ye lend to those of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? even sinners lend to sinners to receive again as much. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing back; * and your [b]reward shall be great, and ye shall be the sons of the Most High: for he is kind to the unthankful and the evil.

5 (36-38): under the Father's government.

[5] Be [c]merciful, as your Father is merciful; and [d]judge not, and ye shall not be judged; and condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned; [e]release, and ye shall be released; [f]give, and it shall be given unto you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For [g]with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.

6 (39-45): the overcoming of evil.

[6] He spake unto them also a parable: Can the [h]blind lead the blind? will they not both fall into the ditch?

w Matt. 5. 39. *cf.* Is. 50. 6. *cfr.* Acts 23. 2, 3.
x *cf.* 1 Cor. 6. 7, 8. Matt. 5. 40.
y *cf.* Deut. 15. 7-10. *cf.* 1 Jno. 3. 17. *cf.* Gal. 6. 9. Matt. 5. 42.
z Matt. 7. 12. *cf.* Gal. 5. 14. *cf.* Rom. 13. 8-10.
a Matt. 5. 46, 47.
b Matt. 5. 45. *cf.* Matt. 6. 4. *cf.* ch. 14. 14. *cf.* Matt. 25. 34, 35.
c *cf.* Matt. 5. 48. *cf.* Eph. 5. 1, 2. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16.
d Matt. 7. 1, 2. *cf.* Rom. 14. 10-13. *cf.* Jas. 4. 11. *cf.* 1 Cor. 5. 12, 13.
e *cf.* Matt. 6. 14, 15. *cf.* Matt. 18. 23-35.
f Prov. 28. 27.

* Some render, "despairing of none." But the text is clearly right.

cf. Gal. 6. 7-10; *cf.* Eccl. 11. 1, 2. g Mk. 4. 24; Jas. 2. 13; *cf.* Rev. 18. 6. h Matt. 15. 14; *cf.* Is. 9. 16; *cf.* Matt. 23. 24; *cf.* Mal. 2. 7, 8.

non-resistance which follows it we have already remarked upon in going through Matthew. The bountiful spirit which becomes those who owe their all to the free gift of God is enforced in the words, "Give to every one that asketh thee," —words which surely require the wisdom inspired by divine love to guide in their application. This part closes with the general principle that "as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."

[4] The way of the world is put in contrast with this, the world being quite capable of returning love for love, of doing good to those who do good to them, of lending with the hope of getting back as much. But to love and do good and lend without hope of return: this would be conduct suited to the sons of the Most High; because He is kind to the unthankful and the evil.

[5] Thus we are to be imitators of God as dear children, and under a Father's holy government also, according to which the measure meted will be measured out; and this as what both suits the nature of God, and the truest interests of His people also. It is evident, therefore, that rewards are not intended to be denied, nor yet disregarded: for that which God gives it cannot but be of God that it should have place in our thoughts and in our hearts. Seeing what we are, this needs and receives careful guarding. We find it so again and again:—*guarded*, but maintained in this very way (Matt. xix. 27–30, xx. 20–28, *notes*). He gains who for Christ's sake loses; but not for *gain's* sake.

[6] The "blind" are primarily, no doubt, the Jewish leaders; but the follower will not escape the ditch by being simply a follower: for the truth speaks for itself to him who has ears to hear. He who gives himself up to another's leadership absolutely, has his conscience not before God, but before man; and even the Lord bases His title to be heard upon the truth of what He spoke: "*If I say the truth*, why do ye not believe Me?" (John viii. 46.) That to

The [t]disciple is not above the teacher, but every one that is perfected shall be as his teacher. But [u]why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, and considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? [v]How canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me cast out the mote out of thine eye, and beholdest not the beam that is in thine eye? Hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote that is in thy brother's eye. For there is [w]no good tree which bringeth forth corrupt fruit, nor again a corrupt tree bringing forth good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit: for of thorns they do not gather figs, nor gather in grapes from a bramble. The [x]good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and the evil one out of that which is evil bringeth forth evil: for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

7 (46–49): the complete disciple.

[y]But [z]why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? [a]Every one that cometh to me and heareth my words and doeth them, I will show you what he is like: he is like a man building a house, who digged and went [b]deep, and laid a foundation upon the [c]rock; and when a [d]flood came, the stream brake against that house, and was [e]not able to shake it, because it had been built upon the rock.* But he that heareth and doeth not is like a man who [f]without a foundation buildeth a house upon the earth; against which the stream brake, and immediately it fell in, and the ruin of that house was [g]great.

* Many read only "well builded."

t Matt.10.24. Jno. 15. 20. *cf.* 2 Pet. 1. 14.
u Matt. 7. 3. *cf.* Gal. 6.1.
v *cf.* 2 Cor. 10. 6. *cf.* Rom. 2. 21-23.
w Matt. 7.17, 18. Matt.12.33
x Matt. 12. 34, 35. *cf.* Prov. 4. 23. *cf.* Gal.5.19 -23.
y Matt.7. 21 -23. *cf.*ch.13.25. *ctr.* 1 Cor. 12. 3.
z Matt. 7.24 -27.
a *cf.* Matt. 13. 5.
b *cf.* 1 Cor.3. 11.
c Ps. 32. 6.
d *cf.* John 5. 24. *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 17. *cf.* Rom. 8. 33, 34.
e *cf.*Is.28.14-17. *ctr.* Prov. 10. 25.
f *cf.*Prov.1. 24-27. *cf.* Heb. 10. 28, 29.

which a man yields himself necessarily moulds him. If then he surrenders himself to the teacher of error, he will not be above his teacher, but, if he is perfect, be only like him.

On the other hand, if evil be detected in another's eye—in his way of regarding things (and here the teacher of error seems still primarily pointed at)—one must take care that there be no lack of self-judgment as to one's own. Evil must first be judged within before it can be judged outside; and this will give tenderness and compassion, as well as clear sightedness. Judging without self-judgment is but hypocrisy.

And this self-judgment is always of the "beam" as compared with the "mote" in others. For what can we know of others compared with what we may and should know of ourselves? And then the evil fruit we find is but the sign of an evil tree: thorns grow no figs, nor brambles grapes. Thus true self-judgment sets aside self altogether. We do not judge to establish our own righteousness, nor as rejoicing in the evil, but as rejoicing with the good: we learn to "take forth the precious from the vile," because the good *is* "precious."

[y] Useless indeed is the profession of the lips,—the saying, "Lord, Lord,"—except the life confirm it. Not that the best life will justify before God, or save in the day when all that can be will be shaken. But it is evidence, nevertheless, that Christ is the foundation of the soul,—of a house built secure against all the storms that can assail it. Faith in Christ must, of course, be real; but the more real the faith in other things, the more complete is the delusion, the surer and more fatal the ruin that awaits one. "The ruin of that house is great."

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chaps. vii.–viii. 21.)

The Word as the Ministry of Salvation.

1[1](vii. 1-17): "Living and powerful." [1] (1-10): supreme over all power.

1. [1] WHEN he had [v] completed all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered into Capernaum. And a certain [w] centurion's servant, who was dear to him, was sick and at the point of death. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him that he would come and heal his servant. And they, when they had come to Jesus, besought him earnestly, saying, He is [x] worthy to whom thou shouldest grant this: for he loveth our nation, and himself hath builded the synagogue for us. And Jesus went with them; but when he was already not far from the house, the centurion sent [y] friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself; for I am not fit that thou shouldest enter under my roof; wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee, but say in a word and my servant shall be healed. For I am also

[v] Matt. 8. 1.

[w] Matt. 8. 5-13.

[x] *ctr.* ver. 7. *cf.* ch. 18. 14.

[y] *cf.* ver. 3.

SUBD. 2.

We have now the Word as that by which the ministry of salvation is effected; the language being still often, as that of the synoptic Gospels so much is, symbolic, and the healing of the body illustrative of that deeper spiritual healing which it is so well qualified to picture to us, and which is so in the mind of the Spirit to keep before us. This fuller blessing, without which there is none, comes moreover continually into more open view, and its features are revealed with growing fulness.

1. The two narratives with which this part opens show us in the most striking way the power of the divine Word as Christ utters it. The first is the story of the centurion in whom the Lord finds greater faith than He had found in Israel: a faith which owns the Lord's supremacy, whether present or absent, over all the powers of nature which are obedient to His will. The second is that of the raising of the widow's son at Nain, which shows that giving way to His word which is the stamp upon the fallen creature; the removal of which is the significant pledge of power come in able to deliver from the condition itself of which it is the stamp. Here then, is indeed a "word living and powerful," as the epistle to the Hebrews calls it (chap. iv. 12), and ready as well as competent to meet man's need.

[1] Matthew gives us the healing of the centurion's servant, but in another connection, and with certain differences, which have occasioned question. For Luke represents not only the elders of the Jews as first sent with prayer that Jesus would come and heal the sick man, but that, while He is upon the road, the friends of the centurion are sent with a second message, which excuses his not coming in person by his felt unworthiness. In Matthew we are told the centurion came; but his words are to the same effect as those of his friends in Luke. It seems, therefore, that the account in the former is to be explained by the latter: the Gentile Gospel taking care to show fully the humble place that the Gentile took, both in making use of the Jewish elders, and in not actually coming to the Lord Himself. The faith at which the Lord wonders is related in both; while the Jewish writer it is who gives, and in fullest accord with the dispensational character of his book, the warning to the Jews of the rejection of children of the Kingdom, while those of the nations should come in from every quarter to partake in its blessings with the patriarchs of Israel.

The Roman soldier sees everywhere in the world the law and order which Rome so emphasized. But he sees it to draw an argument from it for the abso-

a man set under [z]authority, having under me soldiers, and I say to this one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh, and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. Now when Jesus heard these things he wondered at him, and turning to the multitude following him, said, I say unto you, that not even in [a]Israel have I found faith so great. And they that had been sent, returning to the house, found the servant [b]whole that had been sick.*

2 (11-17): death subject to it.

2 And it came to pass afterwards† he went into a city called [c]Nain; and his disciples went with him, and a great multitude. Now, as he drew near to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a [d]widow; and quite a multitude of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her he had compassion on her, and said unto her, [e]Weep not. And coming up to it, he touched the bier; and the bearers stood still; and he said, Young man, I say to thee, Arise. And the [f]dead sat up and began to speak; and he gave him to his mother. And fear took hold on all, and they [g]glorified God, saying, A great prophet is risen up among us, and God hath [h]visited his people. And this word went forth concerning him in all Judea, and in all the region round about.

z *cf.* ch. 5.24.

a *cf.* Matt, 15. 27, 28.

b *cf.* Jno. 4. 50-53. *cf.* Ps. 107. 20. *cf.* Jer. 23. 23.

c *cf.* Ruth 1. 20. *cf.* 2 Ki. 2. 19. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 16, 17.

d *cf.* 2Ki.4.1. *cf.* Lam.1.1.

e *cf.* ch.8.52. *cf.* Jno. 11. 35.

f *cf.* Matt.11. 5. *cf.* Jno. 11. 43, 44.

g *cf.* ch. 8. 54, 55.

h ch. 1. 68. *cf.* Jer. 29. 10.

* Many omit this last clause. † Many read "on the next day."

lute authority of Him whom his faith owns as having supreme power over all the powers of nature. He himself, only a man under authority, could speak and be obeyed; it needed not, then, the presence of Jesus—He needed not to put His own hand to the work, when all things served Him. We have only to compare the wonder of His disciples when He calmed the the sea of Galilee, to realize how indeed the faith of the Gentile surpassed that of the Lord's nearest and chosen followers.

2 The story of Nain is found in Luke only. Nain means "pleasant," what the world was as God made it; what it is still naturally to the natural man. But at the gate of it, carried out, is a dead man, death being still the way out of the world, as it is the shadow over it. The widowed mother, whose only son he is, and the sympathetic crowd that follows, show in how many ways death affects the survivors. The consequences of it, which lie in another world, are not introduced into this picture, but man's conscience will not allow him to forget them: "the sting of death is sin," which threatens the soul with judgment.

Thus the pleasant world is become the "valley of death-shade," and as such Christ has come to it in His infinite compassion, as He comes here to Nain. To the sorrowing mother He says, "Weep not," and His is no fruitless sympathy. He *touches the bier*, as touch it Himself He must, by His death to give His word power over it. Then the word is spoken which abolishes it, and the dead man rises. He "sat up and began to speak; and He gave him to his mother."

Here, then, is man's need fully met, the judgment which is upon him, all that sin and death imply, has found a remedy. The people fear, and glorify God; and the word goes out throughout all Judea that a great prophet is risen up, and God hath visited His people: a testimony true indeed, but quite below the wondrous truth as to His Person who was there.

2 (vii. 18-35): The twofold testimony of God, demanding faith on man's part.
1 (18-23): the sufficiency of witness to Christ.

2. [1] And the disciples of John brought him word of all these things; and calling two of his disciples, John [i]sent them to the Lord,* saying, Art thou the one that is coming, or wait we for another? And when the men came to him, they said, John the Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou the one that is coming, or wait we for another? In that hour he healed many of diseases and plagues and evil spirits; and to many that were blind he gave sight. And he answered and said to them, Go and bring John word what ye have seen and heard. The [j]blind recover sight; the [k]lame walk; the [l]lepers are cleansed; the [m]deaf hear; the [n]dead are raised up; the [o]poor have good news preached to them;† and [p]blessed is he who shall not be stumbled by me.

2 (24-35): His testimony to John and the rejection of both John and Himself, except by a remnant.

[2] And when the messengers of John had departed, he began to say unto the multitudes concerning John: [q]What went ye out into the wilderness to behold? a [r]reed shaken by the wind? But what went ye out to

i Matt.11.2-6.
j *cf.* ch.4.18, 19. *cf.* Matt. 9. 27-31.
k *cf.* Matt. 15. 31.
l ch.5.12-14.
m Mk. 7.32-37.
n vers.14,15.
o *cf.* ch. 14. 12-24.
p *cf.* Matt. 16. 17. *cf.*1Pet.2.8.
q Matt. 11.7-11.
r *cf.* Eph. 4. 14. *cf.*Jas.1.6,7.

* One ancient MSS. reads "Jesus." † Literally, "are evangelized."

2. The twofold testimony of God which man needs and which God has provided is now shown us in John and the Lord: John the preacher of repentance, the witness to man's condition, the summing up of the Old Testament controversy with man, while pointing forward, as the Old Testament did, to Him who was to come; Christ the Bringer of salvation, the New Testament Voice, the Manifester of God to men, and who opens the way to God for men.

Repentance and faith are the double answer to this double testimony, though neither of these can exist without the other. They are the backward and forward glances of the soul, and which are at the same time its downward and upward ones. Or, conversion being the "turning round" of man, repentance is the back turned upon self, as faith is the face turned toward God in Christ. Repentance is as inseparable, therefore, from faith, as faith is from repentance.

The testimony of John and of Christ come in, then, in this place with perfect naturalness; and in the contrast between them their accord is manifest. In both, divine wisdom will be justified by her children, and the refusal of the one will be seen, as in Israel's case, to be the refusal of the other.

[1] But first we have to see the Baptist in his prison perplexed with doubt, as to which he sends two of his disciples to Christ, that He may satisfy it. "Art Thou the One that is coming?" is his question, "or wait we for another?" Honest doubt never stays away from Christ, but comes to Him for solution. The Lord points him to the works which at that very time He was doing, the power of God being manifested in various goodness, while the gospel-tidings were being given to the poor. Not wonders alone were evidence, but wonders that were "*signs*"—significant of the nature and power of Him from whom they proceeded. While all the time the sweet gospel invitation addressed itself to the needy, most Godlike in coming lowest down.

The Lord adds one gentle word for the conscience of His fore-runner: "And blessed is he who shall not be stumbled by Me." (See pp. 122, 123, *notes.*)

[2] The messengers departed with this, and now, when John may seem to have failed entirely in his witness, the Lord bears witness to him. Be it that he had failed, was it in vain that crowds had gone out into the wilderness after him? Was he then but a reed shaken with the wind? Was he a courtier of men, clothed in soft raiment? did they look for such in the wilderness, rather than in the courts of kings? Certainly, his whole life proved him far other than these.

see? a man clothed in [s]soft raiment? behold, they that are in splendid apparel, and live luxuriously are in kings' courts. But what went ye out to see? a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and [t]more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, [u]Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. For I say unto you, Among those born of woman there is none greater than John; but he who is [v]less in the kingdom of God is greater than he. (And all the people who heard, and the tax-gatherers, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John; but the [w]Pharisees and lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, having not been baptized of him.) To what, then, shall I [x]liken the men of this generation, and to what are they like? They are like children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned, and ye have not wept. For John the Baptist came [y]neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and ye say, He hath a demon. The Son of man is come [z]eating and drinking, and ye say, Behold, a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners! And wisdom is [a]justified by all her children.

3 (vii. 36–50): A spiritual transformation, and the secret of it.

3. And one of the Pharisees asked him to [b]eat with him; and he entered into the Pharisee's house and sat down [to meat].* And behold, a woman that was in

s Matt. 3. 4. *cf.* 2 Ki.1.8. *cf.*ch.16.19.

t *cf.* Jno. 1. 21. *ctr.* Jno. 1. 27.

u Mal. 3. 1.

v *cf.* Matt. 13. 17. *cf.*Eph.3.5.

w *cf.* Matt. 21. 23-27. *cf.*Matt.23. 13, etc.

x Matt. 11. 16-19.

y ch. 1. 15.

z *cf.* ver. 36. *cf.*ch.15.1,2.

a *cf.*1 Cor.1. 21-24.

b *cf.* ch.14.1.

* Literally, "reclined."

But what was it, then, that drew men after him? Was he a prophet? Yea, says the Lord, and more than a prophet: he was one of whom the prophet had spoken, as the messenger of God before Messiah's face, to prepare His way before Him.

Such then was John, the preparer for the Kingdom of God; as great in this position as any of women born; yet the one comparatively little, actually in the Kingdom thus announced, would be greater than he. (See pp. 123, 124, *notes.*)

But in fact John's message had been rejected by the leaders of the nation, the Pharisees and lawyers, while only those classed by these as "sinners" had heard and been baptized by him. These owned the righteousness of God in pressing upon them through John their need of repentance; but the others rejected for themselves the counsel of God, and were not baptized of him. Thus a remnant only of the people, and these the outcasts, were ready for the grace which now addressed itself to them. As to that generation at large, they could only be compared to children sitting in the market-place, triflers who would have had John dance to their piping, and the Lord and His disciples weep when *they* mourned. They understood not, for they were too careless to understand, either the one or the other. To them John was but a demoniac; Christ a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, to be judged according to the company He kept. The children of wisdom alone justified wisdom's ways: and who, then, were these children of wisdom? The answer to this is given us in what immediately follows now.

3. That which follows is one of those stories peculiar to Luke and characterizing it, the story of the woman in the Pharisee's house: the woman a "sinner;" the Pharisee one of those "ninety and nine just persons" of whom the

the city, a [c]sinner; and when she knew that he sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of [d]ointment, and standing behind at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her [e]tears, and wiped them with the [f]hairs of her head, and [g]kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. Now, when the Pharisee that had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, [h]This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him, that she is a sinner. And Jesus answered and said to him, Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee. And he saith, Teacher, say on. A certain creditor had two debtors: the one owed [i]five hundred pence,* and the other [j]fifty. And they having [k]nothing to pay, he [l]forgave them both: which of them therefore will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose, he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And turning to the woman, he said unto Simon, Beholdest thou this woman? I entered into thy house; [m]thou gavest me no water for my feet, but she hath wetted my feet with her tears, and wiped them with her hair. Thou gavest me no kiss;

c *cf.* Jno. 8. 3, etc.

d *cf.* Ex. 30. 22–33 with Song 1. 3, 12. *cf.* Jno. 12. 3, etc.

e *cf.* 1 Tim. 1. 13–15. *cf.* ch. 18. 13.

f *cf.* 1 Cor. 11. 15 with Phil. 3. 4–7.

g *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15.

h ch. 15. 2. ch. 19. 7.

i *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 9.

j *cf.* Jno. 19. 38.

k *cf.* Rom. 3. 20. *cf.* Rom. 5. 6.

l *cf.* Eph. 1. 7. *cf.* Rom. 5. 15, 16.

m *ctr.* ch. 19. 6.

* denarii.

Lord afterwards speaks, and whom He puts there in contrast with the "lost." Here it is the Pharisee who invites the contrast.

They had called Him the "Friend of sinners." We see here how truly He was that, and in what manner: what sinners gained from that wondrous friendship. We see a spiritual transformation wrought, and wisdom justified in a child of wisdom, a sinner transformed. We see how sanctification comes from salvation, or, indeed, is the internal part of it; and that there is nothing holier than the gospel grace.

Asked by a Pharisee to eat with him, Jesus enters the house and takes His place at table. And there it is—strange place for such a meeting—a woman in the city who is a sinner, having heard that He is in the house, draws near and stands behind Him weeping, her tears falling upon His feet. With the hairs of her head she wipes them off, and kissing His feet, anoints them with the ointment which she has brought with her.

Sinner she is, yet the knowledge of it does not keep her back; rather it gives her boldness to be there where of all places, perhaps, she would find the most unsparing judgment. But His shield shall be over her—the Friend of sinners: how differently does that sound to her, and to the Pharisee whose house she has entered!

Indeed he is already astir, his mind drawing its conclusion against One who can permit the familiarity that a woman like this is showing. But even He, he reasons, must be ignorant of her character. A prophet would have known; but a prophet could not have permitted defilement such as this. The Lord answers his unspoken thoughts and makes him judge of himself as compared with this woman whom he condemns; a sinner, truly, but a forgiven sinner. Surely, he too could not deny himself to be a sinner! and if so, did *he* not know for himself the sweet sanctifying power of forgiveness,—the outflow of heart to God who has forgiven? Perhaps, indeed, he had not sinned as she: could God then forgive the debt of fifty pence, but not the five hundred? And if to her the larger debt had been remitted, could he not recognize in these tears, this abandonment of ecstatic emotion, in contrast with his own cold treatment of the

but she, from the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but she hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, her sins—the many—are [n]forgiven: for she loved much; but he to whom little is forgiven [o]loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And those who were at meat with him began to say among themselves, [p]Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he saith unto the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee: [q]go in peace.

4 (viii.1-21): The seed testing the soil.

1 (1-3): gathering.

4. [1] And it came to pass afterwards that he [r]went throughout [the country], city by city and village by village, preaching and announcing the good tidings of the kingdom of God; and the twelve [were] with him, and certain women who had been [s]healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary who was called Magdalene, out of whom had gone seven demons, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, who [t]ministered to him of their substance.

2 (4-8): the diverse growth.

[2] And a great multitude coming together, and those who were coming to him out of every city, he spake by a parable: The [u]sower went forth to sow his seed;

n *cf.* 1 Jno. 1. 9.

o *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 19. *cf.* 1 Tim. 1. 14-17.

p *cf.* Matt. 9. 3-6.

q ch. 8. 48. Jno. 8. 11.

r *cf.* Mk. 1. 38.

s Matt. 27. 55, 56. *cf.* Mk. 16. 9.

t *cf.* ch. 4. 38, 39. *cf.* Mk. 5. 18.

u Matt. 13. 3-8. Mk. 4. 3-8.

Guest he had invited, the sense of that larger debt which made her in a Pharisee's eyes a sinner indeed?

But remitted! Yes, it was the consciousness of that remission which had wrought in her after this manner. Even he should understand—could understand in the case of a common debtor; though himself having been forgiven little, he loved but little.

Thus the Pharisee is set in the light of God, and his inmost heart searched out, while He who reveals Himself in doing this, openly takes the place which the woman's faith before had given Him, and confirms to her that which she in her simplicity had appropriated already. "And He said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven." If they murmur at His words, only the more positively does He reiterate them: "And He said unto the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

4. [1] We have seen, then, the power of the Word in the soul of one that receives it; all the more that, as we saw her first, she had as yet had no word distinctly addressed to herself to assure her of the blessing which she grasps with such effect. We now go on to see how the fruits produced characterize the reception of it,—how the seed tests the soil. This is shown in that familiar parable of the Sower, which we have had already in the two previous Gospels, here given a slightly abbreviated form, and without the parables which accompany it in them. As an introduction to it, however, we are shown as fruit of the Word the company of disciples who now follow the Lord, and some of whom minister to Him of their substance. It is here first we find those faithful women who follow Him to the cross itself, and at the sepulchre greet Him first in resurrection. Their own deliverance has attached them to Him, and He on His part receives their services, emancipating them from the harsh restrictions of Rabbinism, which put the woman into a not merely inferior but a degraded place. The twelve are also with Him, and throughout all Galilee, with the testimony of word and work, goes also that of the new communion of faith and love which Christianity was fully and universally to establish.

[2, 3] People gather together to Him out of every city around; and in the midst of such a multitude it is that the Lord searches out the heart (as so commonly He does where the crowds follow Him) by the parable of the Sower.

and, as he sowed, some fell by the [v]wayside, and it was trodden under foot, and the [w]birds of heaven devoured it. And other fell upon the [x]rock, and when it had sprung up it withered away, because it had no [y]moisture. And other fell in the midst of [z]thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. And other fell into [a]good ground, and sprang up, and brought forth fruit a hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath [b]ears to hear, let him hear.

3 (9-18): the interpretation: all to be manifested.

[3] And his disciples [c]asked him, What may this parable be? And he said, To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest in parables, that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand. But the parable is this: The seed is the [d]word of God. Now those by the wayside are those that hear: then cometh the [e]devil and taketh away the word from their hearts, that they may not believe and be saved. But those upon the rock are those who when they hear receive the word with [f]joy; and these have no root, who for awhile believe, and in time of temptation fall away. But that which fell among thorns, these are they that hear, and as they go on their way are choked under anxieties and [g]riches and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground, these are they who, in an [h]honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it and bring forth fruit with [i]patience.

Now no one that hath lighted a [j]lamp covereth it with a vessel or putteth it under a [k]bed, but putteth it upon a lamp-stand, that those who enter in may [l]see the light. For there is nothing [m]hidden that shall not be made manifest, nor secret that shall not be known and come out openly. Take [n]heed, therefore, how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

4 (19-21): the ways that test men

[4] And there [o]came to him his mother and his brethren, and could not get to him because of the crowd. And it was told him, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee. And he answering said to them, My mother and my brethren are these who [p]hear the word of God and do it.

v *cf.* Acts 17. 18-21.
w *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.
x *cf.* Jer. 5. 3. *ctr.* Acts 2. 37. *cf.* Ps. 51. 17.
y *cf.* Jno. 3. 5.
z *cf.* Gen. 3. 18. *cf.* ch. 18. 24. 25.
a *cf.* Acts 16. 14. 27-30.
b Matt. 11. 15. Matt. 13. 9. Mk. 4. 9.
c Matt. 13. 10-23. Mk. 4. 10-20.
d 1 Pet. 1. 23.
e *cf.* Acts 13. 10. *cf.* 1 Cor. 2. 14.
f *cf.* Gal. 4. 15. *ctr.* 1 Thess. 1. 6. *cf.* Jno. 9. 22. *cf.* 1 Thess. 3. 3-5.
g 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. *cf.* 2 Tim. 4. 10.
h *cf.* Ps. 32. 2, 5.
i *cf.* Rom. 2. 7. *cf.* Heb. 10. 36.
j Matt. 5. 14-16. Mk. 4. 21-23. ch. 11. 33.
k *ctr.* ch. 12. 19.
l *cf.* 2 Cor. 3. 2. *cf.* Phil. 2. 15, 16.
m Matt. 10. 26. ch. 12. 2. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 10.
n Matt. 13. 12. Mk. 4. 24, 25.
o Matt. 12. 46-50. Mk. 3. 31-35.
p *cf.* Matt. 25. 40. *cf.* Heb. 2. 11.

No fruit is to be got from man for God, except as the word of God produces it; but with the same seed and the same Sower, how different are the results! The devil, the flesh, and the world are in triple league against God and His word, and man is traitor to himself in listening to them. All this, however, has been already dwelt upon. The closing verses are substantially as in Mark (iv. 22–25).

[4] The following verses are also in both the other Synoptists, though here somewhat briefer and in different connection. They complete, in the place in which they stand in Luke, the view of the relation of the word of God to salvation and fruitfulness for God, and carry us on in principle to Christianity, which develops and manifests this.

SUBDIVISION 3. (Chaps. viii. 22–ix. 36.)

The Fulness of Salvation.

1 (viii.22-25): Peace in Him who is supreme over all.

1. NOW it came to pass on one of those days that he [q]entered into a ship, and his disciples. And he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake: and they set out. And as they sailed, he fell [r]asleep. And there came down a squall of wind upon the lake; and they were filling, and were in jeopardy. And they came to him and awoke him, saying, [s]Master, master, we perish. And he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water; and they ceased, and there was a calm. And he said to them, [t]Where is your faith? But they were afraid and wondered, saying one to another, [u]Who then is this, that he commandeth both the winds and the water, and they obey him?

q Matt. 8.23-27. Mk. 4. 35-41.

r *cf.* Jno.4.6. *cf.* Ps. 121. 3, 4.

s *cf.* Ps. 44. 23. *cf.* Matt.14. 30, 31.

t *cf.* ch. 9.41. *ctr.* Matt.8. 10.

u *cf.* ch.5.26, etc.

2 (viii.26-39): Deliverance from the enemy.

2. And they [v]arrived at the country of the Gadarenes,* which is over against Galilee. And as he went out upon the land, a certain man met him from the city who had demons, and for a long time had put on [w]no clothes, and abode not in a house, but in the [x]tombs. But when he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and said with a loud voice, [y]What have I to do with thee, Jesus, [thou] Son of the Most High God?

v Matt. 8.28-34. Mk. 5.1-20.

w *cf.* Gen.3. 7-11.

x *cf.* Prov. 21. 16.

y *cf.* Mk. 1. 23, 24. *cf.* Jas.2.19.

*Some read, "Gerasenes."

SUBD. 3.

The third subdivision also for the most part simply puts together in different connection what Matthew and Mark have already given us. Together the details show us the fulness of salvation which Christ has provided for us, and which the opposition of the world only brings into fuller prominence. There must be deliverance out of it also, only we must not expect here the full Christian deliverance of the epistle to the Galatians, but a moral one rather, from its spirit and ways, the rejection of Christ being that of every follower of His, and faith, therefore, giving victory over it.

1. We have, first, deliverance from the power of circumstances through identification with Him who is supreme over all. Thus for faith there is peace through whatever storms: although this does not mean that the hearts of disciples are always on the level of their privileges. Here on the sea of Galilee they were plainly not so. Jesus was with them, that they knew; but He was asleep, and the winds and waves seemed to have no regard for Him. In their fear they rouse Him, to find relief in His display of a power with which they had not credited Him, but to meet the sorrowful reproof on His part, "Where is your faith?" In truth our prayers in their very urgency often betray our unbelief, and would reproach the Lord on His side with a passivity which is but a sign of the confidence that He would fain repose in us as those who know His truth and steadfastness. "He that feareth is not perfected in love"—*His* love: he has not learned as yet the lesson of such entire trustworthiness as is to be found in Him.

Peace, then, at all times, is God's provision for us; the greeting with which Christ ever meets us; the legacy which His death has left us. All winds and waves yield alike to Him; all things good and evil serve Him, and therefore serve His people, through His abiding care.

2. We have next the story of the demoniac possessed with the "legion," the

I beseech thee, torment me not. For he commanded the unclean spirit to come out from the man. For many times it had seized upon him, and he was kept bound with chains and fetters, and he [z] brake the bands and was driven by the demon into the deserts. And Jesus asked him, saying, [a] What is thy name? And he said, Legion: for many demons had entered into him. And they besought him that he would not command them to go away into the [b] abyss. Now there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain; and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them. And the demons went out of the man and entered into the [c] swine; and the herd rushed violently down the steep into the lake and were choked. Now when those that fed them saw what had taken place, they fled and told it in the city and in the country. And they went out to see what had come to pass, and came to Jesus, and found the man out of whom the demons had gone [d] sitting, [e] clothed, and in his [f] right mind at the feet of Jesus; and they were afraid. And those that had seen it told them how the man possessed by demons had been healed. Then the whole multitude of the surrounding country of the Gadarenes* asked him to [g] depart from them: for they were taken with great fear; and he entered into the ship and returned. But the man out of whom the demons had gone [h] besought him that he might be with him. But he sent him away, saying, [i] Return to thy house, and relate how great things God hath done for thee. And he went away through the whole city, publishing how great things Jesus had done for him.

3 (viii.40–56): Faith realized and the dead raised
1 (40–42): the ruler.

3. [1] And it came to pass, when Jesus returned, that the multitude received him gladly, for they were all expecting him. And behold, there [j] came a man whose name was Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue. And, falling at Jesus' feet, he besought him to come into his house; for he had an only [k] daughter about twelve years old, and she was dying.

z *cf.* Rom. 8. 7.
a *cf.* Gen. 32. 27. *cf.* 1 John 1. 9.
b *cf.* Rev. 20. 1-3. *cf.* Jude 6.
c *cf.* ch. 15. 15. *cf.* 2 Pet. 2. 22.
d *cf.* Matt. 11. 28.
e *cf.* Phil. 3. 9.
f *cf.* 2 Tim. 1. 7.
g *cf.* Acts 16. 39. *cf.* ver. 28. *cf.* Matt. 25. 41.
h *cf.* ch. 18. 43. *cf.* Phil. 1. 23, 24.
i *ctr.* ch. 5. 14. *cf.* Matt. 11. 20, etc. with John 4. 48. *cf.* Acts 4. 20.
j Matt. 9. 18, 26. Mk. 5. 22–43.
k *cf.* ch. 9. 38. *cf.* Is. 37. 22.

*Some read "Gerasenes."

picture of whose condition is as full as that in Mark, fuller than Matthew. We see the awful power of Satan over him whom he has enslaved, in contrast with the same man "sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind."

We see also the world preferring Satan to the Deliverer, begging Him to depart, while the delivered man beseeches Him that he may be with Him. Yet the Lord dismisses him to be a witness for Him at home of the divine compassion which has wrought in his behalf.

3. After this we have the twofold story of the daughter of Jairus raised from the dead, and the faith that touched the hem of His garment, and found the healing that it anticipated from the touch. In this we have seen already a parabolic meaning, the divine and human sides of salvation being given in these intertwined miracles: the dead hearing the voice of the Son of God and living,

2 (42-48): the touch of faith.

[2] And as he went, the crowds thronged him. And a woman who had had an [l]issue of blood twelve years, who had [m]spent all her living upon physicians and could not be healed of any, came behind and [n]touched the border of his garment, and immediately her issue of blood stopped. And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and those with him said, Master, the multitudes [o]throng thee and press on thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me, for I know that [p]power is gone out of me. Now, when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, [q]declared before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And he said to her, Be of good courage,* daughter: thy [r]faith hath healed thee; [s]go in peace.

3 (49-56): the raising of the dead.

[3] While he yet spake, there came one from the ruler of the synagogue's [house], saying, Thy daughter is [t]dead; trouble not the Teacher. But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, [u]Fear not: only believe, and she shall be made whole. And when he came to the house, he [v]suffered no one to go in but Peter and John and James, and the father and mother of the child. And all were weeping and lamenting her; but he said, Weep not: for she is not dead, but [w]sleepeth. And they derided him, knowing that she had died. And he put them all out,* and took her by the [x]hand, and called, saying, Child, arise. And her spirit came again, and she rose straightway; and he commanded something to be given her to [y]eat. And her parents were astonished, but he enjoined them to [z]tell no one what had come to pass.

4 (ix.1-17): The world's need and the mercy of God.

1 (1-6): authority given.

4. [1] And having [a]called together the twelve, he gave them power and authority over all demons and to heal diseases, and sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. And he said unto them, Take [b]nothing for your journey, neither staff nor wallet, nor bread, nor money; neither have two coats apiece. And

* Many omit this clause.

l *cf.* Lev.15. 19.
m *cf.* Rom. 10. 3. *cf.*Gal.3.21. *cf.* Rom. 3. 20.
n *cf.* ch.5.13. *cf.* Rom. 4. 4, 5.
o *cf.* ch. 13. 25. *cf.*Matt.11. 20.
p *cf.* Matt. 15. 28. *cf.*ch. 5. 17.
q *cf.* Rom. 10. 10.
r ch. 7. 50.
s *cf.* Jno. 8. 11.
t *cf.* Ezek. 37. 11, 12.
u *cf.* Jno.11. 39, 40.
v *cf.* ch.9.28. *cf.*Matt. 26. 37. *cf.*Mk.13.3.
w Jno. 11.11 -14.
x Mk. 1. 31. *cf.* Heb. 2. 14-16.
y *cf.*1 Pet.2. 2.
z *cfr.*ver.39. Matt. 8. 4.
a Matt.10.1, etc. Mk.6.7-12.
b ch. 10. 4. ch. 22. 35. *cf.* 3 Jno.5-8. *cf.* 1 Cor. 9. 7, 14.

while faith draws from the Saviour the virtue that it needs. Matthew here is the briefest of the three Gospels, Mark's account somewhat the fullest; but of the differences we do not seem able to give a proper account.

4. [1] The Lord now sends out the twelve as messengers of His mercy in a needy world. They have authority over the power of Satan and disease, and are to preach the Kingdom of God, of which the miracles are signs and anticipants. This communicated authority is very significant: for *as* communicated it could not be supposed to be due to the character of those who were but the delegates of Another, yet as such clothed with power from God. Luke merely gives a partial outline of this commission, of which Matthew furnishes the full details. Here we have simply the breadth of their authority, the claim upon men which it carries with it, and the testimony against those who reject that claim. The evangelizing is in the forefront, but what hope for those who reject the precious

whatever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart. And whosoever will not [c]receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them. And they departed, and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

[c] *cf.* Jno. 13. 20. Acts 13. 51.

2 (7-9): the world's perplexity.

[2] Now [d]Herod the tetrach heard of all the things that had taken place and was in perplexity, because it was said by some that John was risen from among the dead, and by some that Elias had appeared, and by others that one of the old prophets was risen again. And Herod said, John I have beheaded; but who is this of whom I hear such things? And he [e]sought to see him.

[d] Matt. 14. 1, etc. Mk. 6. 14, etc.

[e] chap. 23. 8.

3 (10-17): the return of the twelve; "satisfying the poor with bread."

[3] And the apostles, when they were [f]returned, related to him all that they had done. And he took them, and [g]withdrew apart into [a desert place belonging to]* a city called Bethsaida. But the multitudes, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed those that had [h]need of healing. And when the day began to decline, the twelve came and said unto him, [i]Send away the multitude, that they may go into the villages round, and into the country, and lodge and find victuals; for we are here in a desert place. And he said to them, Do *ye* give them to eat. But they said, We have not more than [j]five loaves and two fishes, unless we go and buy food for all this people. For they were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, Make them [k]sit down by fifties in a company. And they did so, and made them all sit down. And taking the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven and [l]blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

[f] Mk. 6. 30.

[g] Matt. 14. 13, 14. Matt. 12. 15.

[h] ch. 4. 40. *cf.* Rom. 5. 20.

[i] Matt. 14. 15-21. Mk. 6. 35-44. Jno. 6. 5-13.

[j] *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 27, 28.

[k] *cf.* Rom. 4. 5.

[l] Prov. 10. 22. *cf.* ch. 22. 19. *cf.* ch. 24. 30.

*This clause is omitted by most.

grace of God? yet the denunciation is part of that grace, its last effort to rouse the consciences of men to respond to it.

[2] Herod himself is roused by all this, but partially, to a foreboding perplexity. He has beheaded John, and here is One exhibiting a power which John had not. Luke shows us the tyrant concluding in an opposite way to that which we find in the previous Gospels. Between the incredulity of a Sadducee and the terror of conscience which breaks out beyond the control of it, he vacillates evidently. But here is a problem that he cannot solve, and he is drawn by that which he fears, because he fears it: "he sought to see him." By and by we shall find how, misled by a carnal mind which cannot penetrate the mystery of the Cross, he is able to treat with awful mockery the object of his former fears; and so he disappears out of inspired history.

[3] The twelve return, and the Lord takes them apart privately into a desert place for needed rest. But the multitudes, hearing of it, follow and break in upon Him, and their various necessities call forth once more His compassion actively to minister to them. "He received them, and spake unto them of the Kingdom of God, and healed those that had need of healing." There ensues that first miracle of the multiplication of the loaves which is the only one recorded by Luke and John as well as the other evangelists. With John it is the

And they all ate and were filled; and there were taken up of [m] fragments that remained over to them twelve hand-baskets.

5 (ix.18-36): The way and the end.

1 (18-22: who knows?

5. [1] And it came to pass, as he was [n] praying alone, that his disciples were with him, and he asked them, saying, [o] Who do the multitudes say that I am? And they answered and said, John the Baptist; but others, Elias; and others, that one of the old prophets is risen again. And he said unto them, But who do *ye* say that I am? And Peter answering said, The Christ of God. And he [p] strictly charged them and commanded them to say this to none, saying, The Son of man must [q] suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be [r] raised up.

m *cf.* Eph. 3. 18, 19. *cf.* 2 Ki. 4. 42-44.
n ch. 3. 21. ch. 5. 16. ch. 6. 12. vers. 28, 29. chap. 11. 1. ch. 22. 40-46. ch. 23. 34.
o Matt. 16. 13-20. Mk. 8. 27-30.
p Mk. 1. 34.
q Matt. 16. 21. Matt. 17. 22, 23. Mk. 8. 31.
r *cf.* ch. 24. 6, 7, 46.

text of the Lord's discourse upon the bread of life. Luke is somewhat briefer than any of the others, and omits entirely the scene upon the lake which follows it. As Jehovah, with a marvel of creative power, "He satisfies Israel's poor with bread." The need of the world, true wilderness as it is, is made to manifest the divine resources which are in the hand of Him who because of its misery has come into it. The Creator of it is the Redeemer for it: Christ, the Son of man, is both. The details of the miracle we have had before us in Matthew.

5. But the world is not only a place of want and misery, or of sin as lying at the root of these: it is a place into which the Redeemer has come and they know Him not, but reject and cast Him out. This, therefore, is what really characterizes the world for those who receive Him, and salvation must be a salvation *out of it*. Judgment awaits it; Christ is gone out: heaven receives whom the world has rejected; and for His followers also, if the earth be closed, heaven is opened. Thus the wonder of salvation is increased with the wonder of a rejected Saviour; grace descends lower to find its objects, (for we are all upon the world's dead level,) and places them where all the glory of it will be shown out: for "in the ages to come God will show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Eph. v. 7).

This is now beginning to be shown out to us, although for the full reality of it we must wait until Christ being ascended, the Holy Spirit shall have come down to make known all His glory and the fruit of His work. In the meanwhile, as His rejection becomes manifest, and the way of the cross is seen as the way of discipleship, there is permitted an anticipative vision of "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," that His people may along the road "be strengthened with all might according to the power of His glory" (Col. i. 11) so displayed.

[1] Again we find Him in prayer. The unbelief of men, as we may infer from His question presently, is shadowing His soul with all its sorrow and its bitter fruits. He rises from it to ask His disciples, "Who do the multitudes say that I am?" He is not speaking of manifest rejectors, and their answer does not take its color from the enmity of the scribes and Pharisees. "John the Baptist," "Elias," a prophet of old time risen from the dead, are the conjectures of those who mean to do Him honor; but they are conjectures merely, and not faith, and none of them rise up to the reality: they all fail to apprehend the glory of His Person, and therefore the end for which He is come. The light of His glory who is among them has not shone into their souls; He is not their Saviour,—not the Christ: the Baptist had absolutely disclaimed it, and had declared of the One that was coming after him that He was too great for him to be worthy to undo the latchet of His shoes.

And the Lord questions His disciples: "But who do *ye* say that I am? Peter answers in behalf of them, "The Christ of God." But He forbids them to de-

2 (23-27): the way of the Cross.

[2] And he said to all, [s]If any one will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whosoever shall desire to [t]save his life * shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life * for my sake, he shall save it. For what shall a man be [u]profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose or forfeit himself? For whosoever shall be [v]ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be [w]ashamed, when he shall [x]come in his glory and that of the Father, and of the holy angels. But I tell you of a truth that there are [y]some standing here that shall in no wise taste of death until they see the kingdom of God.

3 (28-36): the glory realized.

[3] And it came to pass [z]about eight days after these words, that, taking Peter and John and James, he went up into a mountain to pray. And as he [a]prayed, the

* Or "soul."

s Matt.10.38. Matt. 16.24-28. Mk.8.34-38. *cf.* Phil.3.10.
t Jno. 12.25, 26. *cf.* Acts 20. 24.
u *cf.* ch. 12. 15-21. *cf.*ch.16.19-31.
v Matt. 10. 32, 33. *cf.* Rom. 1. 16.
w *cf.* Heb. 11. 16.
x Matt. 25. 31.
y *cf.*2 Pet.1. 16-18. Mk. 9. 1.
z Matt. 17.1-9. Mk.9.2-10.
a *cf.*ver. 18.

clare it now, for if Israel had not faith to receive Him, He on His part was going on to fulfil the divine purpose in stooping to suffering and death at their hands; then, on the third day, to be raised up.

He adds nothing to this, the first open, literal announcement of what, even in this way, was too hard a saying for them to understand. The *doctrine* of the Cross, though found in all the Gospels, yet develops slowly there. The Old Testament types of it, to us so familiar, were to the disciples as yet like a fountain sealed, inaccessible; and thus much that we should look upon as plain language—as for instance, the Baptist's witness to the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world"—would be to them a dark saying. Israel in general were looking for a conquering, not a suffering, Messiah. "We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever," they said in answer to one of His own declarations, "and Thou sayest, the Son of man must be lifted up: who is this Son of man?" (John xii. 34). Thus the unwelcome truth struggled through the darkness, and those who confessed His Person were still, as to His work, in darkness like the rest. As a consequence, much of what was plainly announced remained as seed in the ground for a future harvest.

[2] The Lord goes on to declare the way of His followers to be that of the Cross, and here virtually therefore, as He had not yet, the manner of His own death. But He uses the word symbolically, as the expression "daily" (only found in Luke) would convey to them. To follow Him they must sacrifice their life—themselves—in all that the world counts life; perhaps literally lay it down for Him. The life so lost for His sake would be saved, while he who would grasp the present must lose the future. It is a world hostile to Christ through which we pass, and the confession of Him will cost in such a scene. He gives no reason to expect that it will alter in its spirit essentially, but the reverse: the path He treads is, in this fact that it is His, the path for all His followers; and of those who are ashamed of Him and of His words, He will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory—this is only in Luke—and that of His Father, and of the holy angels.

All this, with the exceptions named, is found, and has been considered, in the previous Gospels. The Lord closes, as in them, with the assurance, that some standing there would in no wise taste of death until they should see the Kingdom of God.

[3] The reference to the transfiguration in this has been also considered. Luke links them more directly together than the other evangelists by his reference: "about eight days after these words." Matthew and Mark say "after *six* days." Luke's "eight" stamps it with that character of "newness" which attaches to the number. A new scene indeed for the old sin-stricken earth to witness; and the centre of all its glory a Man in prayer!

[b] fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became white [and] radiant. And behold, there talked with him [c] two men, who were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory and spake of his [d] departure which he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem. Now Peter and those that were with him were weighed down with [e] sleep; but when they were fully awakened, they saw his glory, and the two men who stood with him. And it came to pass when they were departing from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here; and let us make [f] three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias, [g] not knowing what he said. And as he said these things, there came a [h] cloud and overshadowed them; and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, [i] This is my beloved* Son: hear him. And when the voice came, Jesus was found alone; and they kept [j] silence, and told no one in those days any of the things which they had seen.

*A well-supported reading gives "chosen."

b *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 6. *cf.* Heb. 2. 9.
c *cf.* Matt. 18. 16. *cf.* Rom. 3. 21.
d *cf.* ch. 24. 26, 27. *cf.* Acts 17. 3.
e *cf.* ch. 22. 45, 46.
f *ctr.* vers. 19, 20.
g *cf.* Matt. 20. 21, 22. *cf.* Jno. 14. 8-11.
h *cf.* Ex. 13. 21. *cf.* Acts 1. 9.
i ch. 3. 22. *cf.* Jno. 5. 36, 37. *cf.* John 12. 28-30.
j ver. 21.

Such is the new Adam upon whom rests all the blessing of the new creation, and in this sign we read its permanence. Man is no more to lapse from God into a fancied but impossible independence; and the path of obedience is no more to be thought of as one of hard and servile drudgery when the Son of God has chosen it for His own. The glory that now alters the fashion of countenance and radiates from His very garments is His own proper glory, veiled in tenderness only to those to whom He has come to minister, that they might know Him better, as through a darkened glass we better see the sun.

But He is not alone: for where He is must be the fruit of His work and the companions of His love. Two men are with Him, and appear in glory also; but they with a glory which is *not* their own. Moses and Elias, the law-giver and the prophet, shine, as in fact they did, in *His* glory; and that of which they are speaking is that departure which He is to accomplish at Jerusalem, the very thing of which He has been speaking to His disciples without finding ears to hear.

Now, in fact, they are weighed down with sleep. As upon another, how different occasion, but when the same departure was before Him, He compassionately said of them, the spirit might be willing, but the flesh was weak. The heaviness of earth clung about them, and there was not power to rise above it. Only when they were fully awakened did they see His glory and the two that stood with Him. How much too of what we might see do we fail to see, not because of positive evil, and yet because of lack of energy to reach what is so near, yet so beyond us. But what might our lives be—what might they *not* be—if things were different with us!

So even when they are awake, they are dazed and confounded. As the two men are departing, Peter makes an effort to stay them by a proposal to build tabernacles for them, as also for the Lord. But then comes the Cloud and overshadows them; Moses and Elias disappear into the Cloud; and out of it the Father's voice once more as at the Jordan-baptism proclaims His Son. Let them hear Him. And Jesus is found alone.

Here is the end, then, anticipated, which is to strengthen for all the way. We have looked at it already in the previous Gospels, each of which has, no doubt, its differences, though we may be feeble in presenting these. We shall soon reach now what is peculiar to Luke.

SUBDIVISION 4. (Chap. ix. 37–62.)

Testing in an evil World.

1 (37–45): the power to use power may fail, but in Christ is still the resource.

1. AND it came to pass on the following day, when they [k] came down from the mountain, a great multitude met him. And behold, a man from the multitude cried out, saying, Teacher, I beseech thee, look upon my son, for he is mine [l] only child; and behold, a [m] spirit taketh him, and suddenly he crieth out, and it convulseth him with foaming, and crushing him, scarcely departeth from him. And I besought thy [n] disciples that they would cast it out, and they could not. And Jesus answered and said, O [o] unbelieving and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you and suffer you? Bring thy son hither. But while he was [p] yet coming, the demon threw him down and convulsed him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the child, and gave him back to his father. And they were all [q] astonished at the majesty of God.

k Matt. 17. 14–21. Mk. 9. 14–29.

l *cf.* ch. 7. 12. *cf.* Gen. 22. 2. *cf.* Jno. 3. 16.

m ch. 8. 27, etc. *cf.* Matt. 15. 22.

n *cf.* ver. 1.

o *cf.* Jno. 14. 12.

p *cf.* ch. 8. 49.

q ch. 7. 16.

SUBD. 4.

We have seen then what the world is, through which the disciple of Jesus is called to pass, and how the rejection of the Master characterizes it henceforth for the disciple. It is therefore an adverse stream that he is called to breast, and to meet the combined powers of evil in a warfare that never ends on this side heaven,—which, if it seem to do so, it is but the lure of the enemy replacing his open assault; while, as that which intensifies all the struggle, there is that within us constantly in league with the foe without, an enemy behind all our fortifications, a self against oneself.

Yet are we assured that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to those that are the called according to His purpose." It must be therefore that all this is working for good, this various strife, this enemy within also, all this that is the occasion of such and so keen distress, all this that seems so against us. Nay, there must be in all this a wisdom of God exhibited which when learned shall call forth our wonder and our praise,—a wisdom which has in view not time only but eternity.

And it is not hard to understand this: for if God's thoughts are fixed on bringing us into conformity with Himself, the discernment of good and evil must be a large part of this, we must have our senses exercised to this end. How much the manifestation of God Himself has been made in connection with His mastery over the evil! not in mere judgment of it, but much more in His grace. Must we not for the knowledge of Him, as He would have it, learn also what evil is, be tested by it, learn mastery over it? Thus the good of the trial is apparent, and why it should occupy the place it does here in connection with the fulness of salvation.

1. That failure in this conflict should be so much before us is sorrowful enough; yet even so are we most emphatically warned and guarded against it. The very first lesson is that of how to use the power with which we are intrusted; and the story is one which, for our need of it, is found in all three synoptic Gospels. Luke indeed does not dwell upon the details as the two others do,—Mark especially; nor have we even (what may seem stranger) the insistence upon the need of prayer and fasting which we find in the others. Rather do we find that the power is in Christ, and still available, whatever may be the failure of disciples. The actual display of it does not measure what is available, as long as Christ remains accessible, as He ever is, to the feeblest faith of the really needy. The simplicity and ease with which He acts seems most enforced here; and

But as all wondered at all things that Jesus did, he said to his disciples, Let these words [r] sink into your ears: for the Son of man is about to be delivered into the hands of men. But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them that they comprehended it not; and they feared to ask him concerning this saying.

[r] Matt. 17. 22. cf. ver. 31.

2 (46-50): the need of humility.

2. And there arose a [s] reasoning among them, which of them should be the greatest. But when Jesus saw* the reasoning of their heart, he took a little [t] child and set it by him, and said to them, Whosoever shall receive this little child in my name receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me. For he who is [u] least among you all, he is great.

[s] Matt.18.1-6. Mk. 9. 33-37. cf.chap. 22. 24-27.
[t] cf. Ps. 121. ch. 18. 17.
[u] cf. Eph.3. 8. cf.1 Cor.15. 9. cf.Phil.2.3-11.

And John answering said, Master, we saw one casting out demons in thy name, and we forbad him, because he [v] followeth not with us. But Jesus said unto him, Forbid [him] not: for [w] whosoever is not against you is for you.

[v] Mk. 9. 38-40. cf.1Cor.3.5. cf.Num.11. 26-30.

3 (51-56): reproduction and the heart told out.

3. Now it came to pass when the days were being fulfilled for his being received up, that he [z] steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers before his face; and they went and entered into a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, [y] because his face was [as if] going to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw it, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command [z] fire to come down from heaven and consume

[w] cf. ch. 11. 23. cf.Matt.10. 42. cf. Phil. 1. 15-18.
[x] cf. Is.50.7. cf. Heb. 12. 2. cf.Matt.26. 53, 54.
[y] Jno. 4.4,9.
[z] 2Ki. 1. 10, 12. cf. ver. 30.

*Some read "perceived."

Christ as the resource, amid whatever failure on the part of His people is worthy of the first place in the lessons that are given here.

But the fact of His rejection by men abides, however much He may display His power; and though there may be astonishment at it, too, at times. Christ the crucified is the Master we follow, and this truth He would have sink down into our ears and abide with us. Alas, we are not beyond the need either of being warned by the disciples' want of comprehension of this, or even by their fear of being made to comprehend!

2. Two lessons as to humility follow: the first in which the Lord checks the anxiety to be greatest by identifying Himself with the littleness of a little child, and then by the assurance that the least of all among His followers would be great enough. For indeed, that which we have in common, and as the fruit of Christ's work, must be far greater, thank God, than our differences, which will be the result of our own.

The second lesson is in view of their having forbidden one who was casting out demons in Christ's name, but who was not in their company: as if the power that he displayed had been illegitimately acquired. The Lord here assures them that if he were not of their company, he must needs be on their side. For who could divorce the power of the Spirit from the Spirit of power? Self-appreciation here but slenderly covers itself with zeal for Christ; and how soon does it blind us as to plainest principles.

3. We next find the Lord on His way to Jerusalem, the days getting near for His being received up. For the Samaritans it is enough that His face is set toward Jerusalem: they do not receive the messengers sent before to prepare for Him. The spirit of the sons of Zebedee is aflame, and they would bring fire

them, [as also Elias did?]* But he turned and rebuked them; [and said, Ye know not of what spirit ye are: for the [a]Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them]:† and they went to another village.

4 (57–62): the testing by the way.

4. And, as they went in the way, a [b]certain man said unto him, I will follow thee wherever thou goest, [Lord].* And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven [have] roosting-places; but the Son of man hath not [c]where to lay his head. And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and [d]bury my father. But he said unto him, Let the dead bury their own dead, but go thou and announce the kingdom of God. And another also said, I will follow thee, Lord; but first suffer me to bid [e]farewell to those at my house. But Jesus said unto him, No man having laid his hand on the [f]plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.

a Jno. 12. 47. ch. 19. 10.

b Matt. 8. 19, 20. *cf.* ver. 23.

c *cf.* ch. 2. 7. *cf.* ch. 8. 23. *cf.* 1 Cor. 4. 11.

d Matt. 8. 20, 21. *cf.* Gen. 46. 4. *cf.* Gen. 11. 31, 32. *cf.* ch. 18. 28–30.

e *cf.* 1 Ki. 19. 20, 21.

f *cf.* Acts 15. 37, 38. *cf.* 2 Tim. 4. 10, 11.

* Many omit.

† The first part here is doubtful; the last, according to the evidence of MSS., still more so. Yet the interpolation seems difficult to understand, and as to the first part must have been early, for it is found in most of the ancient versions, as well as in Marcion, Clement of Alexandria, and others. See the Am. Editor's note in Lange's Commentary.

down from heaven after the manner of Elijah, to consume the churlish Samaritans. The pleading of Elijah's example seems to imply that they were already by no means sure that the Lord would be disposed to such a visitation of an offence like this. They could hardly have been with Him so long, without having learned as much as this of His long-suffering. But Elijah they had lately seen with Him, and his example they might quote with One who so completely maintained as He did the authority of Scripture. But He makes it no question of Scripture; it was they who knew not of what spirit they were. They were not of His: for the Son of man had not come to destroy men's lives but to save them.

The disciples here illustrate the danger in which we are in, seeking to reproduce the examples left us by the men of faith of old, even where most fully sanctioned by the word of God. Dispensations differ, and we must know well how to recognize the difference. Faith too is an individual thing which can only be exercised in one's own path with God; and the imitation of another, as that, necessarily takes us out of such a path. The carrying out of principles, or obedience to precepts, is, of course, an entirely different thing; only they must be the principles of the dispensation to which we belong. From want of understanding this the Church of God has been judaized, secularized, and carnalized; an earthly priesthood, law, the rule of kings, and how much else, have been introduced into it; it has usurped Israel's place and promises; and Scripture has been quoted for all this, and perverted to make it good. Here too, disciples, acting with honest enough meaning, have not known of what spirit they were.

4. Finally in this section we have what Matthew (viii. 19–22) puts in another connection, and doubtless in the order of time. Luke gives the moral connection and adds a third example of such testing of followers by the Lord, which we can suppose to be of no infrequent occurrence. In the first case there is the enthusiasm which looks well, but needs a more sober estimate of what is involved in following Christ. The second, on the other hand, is unready, and needs the rousing call to prompt obedience. The third, which is in Luke only,

SUBDIVISION 5. (Chaps. x.–xvi.)

God with men, and the responsibility connected with it.

SECTION 1. (chaps. x., xi. 13.)

The divine provision.

1 (x. 1-24): A new commission. [1] (1-16): representatives and forerunners.

1. [1] NOW after these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them [g] two by two before his face into every city and place where he himself was about to come. And he said unto them, The [h] harvest indeed is great, but the laborers are few: supplicate therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send* out laborers into his harvest. Go your way: behold, I send you forth as [i] lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no wallet, no shoes; and salute no one by the way. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if a son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; and if not, it shall return to you again. And in the same house abide, eating and drinking such things as they have: for the

g *cf.* Mk. 6.7. *cf.* Acts 13. 2.

h Matt. 9.37, 38. Jno. 4.35,36. *cf.* 1 Cor. 16. 9.

i Matt. 10. 16. *ctr.* Matt. 7. 15. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 12.

* Literally, "thrust out."

though very similar to the second, requires the renunciation of the claims of the living, as much as of the dead. He who has put his hand to the plow—the one-handled eastern plow, frail and easily overturned, is in question—must keep his eyes on it also, and not look back, or he is unfit for the Kingdom of God.

SUBD. 5.

The transfiguration is a turning-point in all three of the synoptic Gospels. It follows the Lord's announcement of His rejection by the Jews, and the prohibition of His being proclaimed as Christ. Earth has rejected Him, but heaven opens to Him; and this gives character to that which follows.

In Luke especially is there the opening of heavenly things. It is only a glimpse indeed that we get into them. We must not expect the full opening that we have in Christianity, after Christ has gone in for us in the value of His accomplished work, and the Spirit is come out to enable us to enter in there. Still, in the peace-offering view that it presents, God and man are brought together, and we have the anticipation at least, of what is to be fully made known at a later time. Luke connects thus, as has been already said, with Paul's line of truth and Gentile revelation, he himself being a Gentile. It is the portion of Luke to which we have now come that has specially this character; and we shall soon hear of Satan fallen from heaven, though only anticipatively announced, and of those whose names are written there. With this we have the inscrutable glory of the Person of Christ, the tender revelation of man's blessed Neighbor, the fulness of the "good part" given to the saint, and the Spirit to be given to them that ask of God.

All this is found in—

Sec. 1.

the first section here, which speaks, therefore, of the divine provision which has been made for man; as the after ones will show us the opposition of Satan, the world, and the religion of the world, to God's blessed ways, to which afterwards we return to see how God Himself is manifested in them.

1. [1] The commission of the seventy seems at first sight to be but a partial repetition of that given to the twelve. But it is easily seen that this must necessarily be, in so far as they are sent out as the heralds of the same Master into the same world. The number of those sent shows the urgency of the mes-

[j] laborer is worthy of his hire; remove not from house to house. And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat what is set before you, and heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The [k] kingdom of God is come nigh to you. But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go out into the streets of it and say, Even the [l] dust of your city which cleaveth to us upon our feet, we shake off against you; but know this that the kingdom of God is come nigh. I say unto you, that it shall be [m] more tolerable for Sodom in that day, than for that city. [n] Woe to thee, Chorazin! woe to thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had come to pass in Tyre and Sidon which have come to pass in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you. And thou, [o] Capernaum, which* hast been exalted to heaven, shalt be cast down to hades. He that [p] heareth you heareth me, and he that rejecteth you rejecteth me; and he that rejecteth me rejecteth him that sent me.

2 (17-20): The enemy abased.

[2] And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the [q] demons are subjected to us by thy name. And he said unto them, I [r] beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I have given you authority to [s] tread upon serpents and scorpions, and all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Yet in [t] this rejoice not, that the

j Matt. 10. 10. *cf.* 1 Cor. 9. 7, 14.
k ver. 11. Matt. 10. 7.
l ch. 9. 5. *cf.* Acts. 13. 46, 51.
m Mk. 6. 11. *cf.* Heb. 2. 2, 3.
n Matt. 11. 20–24.
o Jno. 2. 12. Matt. 9. 1.
p Matt. 10. 40. Jno. 13. 20. *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 6.
q *cfr.* ch. 9. 40, 49.
r *cf.* Rev. 12. 7–11. *cf.* Rom. 4. 17.
s Mk. 16. 18. *cf.* Acts 28. 3–5.
t *cf.* Matt. 7. 22. *cf.* 1 Cor. 9. 26, 27.

* Perhaps "shalt thou be exalted to heaven?"

sage, as the appended woe upon the cities of Israel implies the nearing judgment of the nation. All being practically (though not openly) decided, makes the result to be manifestly but the separation of a remnant from the self-doomed people. Yet the Kingdom of God is come nigh, and its glories are opening more than ever yet, if hid from eyes that have no care to see them.

[2] The return of the seventy with the joy of their success brings out the farther-sighted joy of their Lord, which plainly reaches on to where the "holy mount" has already carried us. They say exultingly, "Lord, even the demons are subjected to us by Thy Name;" and He replies, that He had beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven, the anticipation of that which Rev. xii. gives in its connection with still future history. It is when the man-child who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron is caught up to heaven, that Satan is cast down to earth. The man-child is surely Christ, as the woman of whom He is born is Israel; yet as soon as Satan is cast down, the three and a half years of the great tribulation begin, which immediately precede the Lord's appearing (*See Matt. xxiv. notes*). The present period is thus passed over, as it is in the Old Testament prophecy, or where Israel is in the foreground, and thus the ascension of Christ and the taking up of saints of the present and the past are seen as one: they are identified with Him who shares with them His "rod of iron" (Rev. ii. 27).

To this time the Lord is looking on here, the beginning of that complete abolishing of Satan's power of which the casting out of demons by the seventy was an anticipation. He goes on to confirm and extend the authority He has given: "Behold," He says, "I have given you to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any

spirits are subjected to you, but rejoice that your names are [u]written in heaven.

3 (21-24): the revelation and glory of the Son.

3 In the same hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit* and said, I [v]thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from wise and prudent, and revealed them unto [w]babes: yea, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. [x]All things have been delivered to me by my Father; and no one knoweth who the Son is but the Father, and who the Father is but the Son, and he to whom the [y]Son may will to reveal him. And he turned to his disciples privately and said, [z]Blessed are the eyes that see the things which ye see. For I say unto you that many [a]prophets and kings have desired to see the things that ye behold, and have not seen them; and to hear the things that ye hear, and have not heard them.

2 (x.25-37): The law and man's neighbor.

2. And behold, a certain [b]lawyer stood up, putting him to the proof, saying, Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And he said unto him, What is written in the [c]law? how readest thou? And he answered and said, Thou shalt [d]love [the] Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself.

*The mass of ancient MSS. with one exception read "Holy Spirit," but it seems strange.

u Phil. 4. 3. Rev. 21.27.
v Matt. 11. 25-27. cf. Eph. 1.5, 6.
w Ps. 8. 2. cf. 1Cor. 1. 26-29. cf. Jas. 2. 5.
x Matt. 28. 18. cf. 1 Pet. 3. 22. cf. Jno. 3.35.
y cf. Jno. 16. 25. cf. Jno. 17. 4, 26.
z Matt. 13. 16, 17. Matt. 16.17.
a cf. Acts 3. 24, 25. cf. 1 Pet. 1. 10-12.
b cf. Matt. 22. 35. cf. ch. 18.18.
c cf. Rom. 7. 12, 13. cf. Gal. 3.21.
d Deut. 6. 5.

means hurt you." And then He adds, "Yet in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subjected to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." Thus already they are assured of a more blessed place than among the earthly people. They are enregistered in heaven (see Heb. xii. 23), as citizens of that "better country."

3 Thus we are being led out beyond Israelitish hopes and promises, and we see along with the mission of the seventy the faint dawning of a new day. And here now we find in its true order of time, what Matthew for his purpose has connected differently, the Lord's declaration of the inscrutable glory of His Person, and of the Father having put all things into His hand; though this was hidden indeed from wise and prudent ones, and revealed to babes alone. What else are men to God? and how could He crown with the knowledge of Himself the wisdom of the world which it had gained in departure from Him? But now had come that which many prophets and kings had desired to see, and not seen; and blessed indeed were the eyes of those who as disciples of this grace had seen it.

2. There follows that story of him that was neighbor to him who fell among robbers, which shows on the one hand the powerlessness of law to furnish a ministry of grace, and on the other the heart of Him who, apart from law and in such a way as to incur reproach for it and indeed the penalty of the law itself, brought help and salvation to the dying sons of men.

It is given as a parable to one who, being a lawyer, and thus a typical Jew of that day, would fain make trial of Him as to His relation to or conception of Moses, whose disciple it was his own boast to be. And yet he must have supposed it a difficult question that he was proposing for this end: "what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Was he beginning, perhaps, to realize the difficulty of it? When the Lord makes the law the measure of doing, and puts it to him to answer his own question, he answers like a man who is not resting in the mere outside of things, but takes love to God and one's neighbor as the very

And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this [e] do and thou shalt live. But he, desiring to [f] justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?

e Lev. 18. 5. cf. Gal. 3. 11, 12. cf. Rom. 10. 5-12.

f cf. ch. 16. 15; cf. 2 Cor. 10. 18; ctr. ch. 7. 29 with ch. 18. 13.

heart of the commandments, as indeed they were. In this, Christ emphatically approves his answer; let him do that, and he shall live.

But to answer the question aright is one thing; to satisfy his soul with it is another: and here is again, perhaps, a token for good, amid all that is evil in his case: there is at least no self-complacency. He seeks to justify himself; but who has accused him? Conscience, it is plain, is at work with him, and that Moses whose disciple he is has become his accuser. He resists it: how we have most of us resisted and resented that sentence of the law which brings us all down to that common level of guilt,—Jews and Gentiles alike "under sin"! The man here is fighting with himself, if in fact he does not discern it, nor even has come yet to realize that it is the heart and not the head merely, as he would fain put it, that is astray: he passes over the "first and great commandment of the law," which he has so clearly stated, to take up the second, and here to shelter himself under a question which he has no thought will turn, as it really does, so terribly against himself, "And who is my neighbor?"

We have heard that it was said by them of old time, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy." Here, then, there might be a matter for much nice discrimination: whether the Israelite alone was the neighbor; whether every one of these was so; whether there was a third class between the two; and then whether, when the classification was uncertain, the duty attaching might be left in suspense too. Casuistry of this kind might certainly be carried far, and men might, of course, let themselves off more or less easily. After all how much uncertainty would come in thus, and correspondingly affect the issue!

But the Lord goes beyond and deeper than all this, and with a searching appeal to the conscience of the questioner sets it all aside. He not only answers the question; He answers it in such a way as completely to expose him to himself, and show him (if he had candor to receive it) that it *was but an unneighborly heart that could ask it.* This man left half-dead upon the road: there is nothing to determine if he were Jew or Gentile; while it is certain that the priest and Levite were both Jews, and that the true neighbor was a Samaritan. It may be that it was their not having settled the lawyer's question that made the men of law so absolutely without help for an unknown stranger.

But the true neighbor of man is so depicted in this parable as to make us feel how the Lord had provided in it for the need of the one before Him (as for how many others since!) when once he had got into the place of need in which so many things become plain to us. Had he not heard what seems to have been no uncommon saying in the mouth of the people, and evidently from His attitude, as they considered it, toward Moses and the law, that *He* was a Samaritan (John viii. 48)? How different the reproach would sound for one who had proved, as he, we may trust, was on his way to prove, the powerlessness of priest and Levite in his case! Commentaries are much given to warning us not to go too far in such application; but the danger of false interpretation is apt to be in the exact opposite direction. A picture out of which we may leave whatever features we please to consider of no use save for decoration, is surely that in which we are most liable to go astray. While the having to make every detail fit is just what will put bounds to the imagination when disposed to stray. The insisting upon as complete as possible agreement between the representation and what it represents is in the interests of exact interpretation every way.

How vividly man's natural course is set before us, in that down-hill, dangerous road, with the back upon the city of God and the face towards the place of curse, as which Jericho stands in the well-known history. The robbers may represent any of the many forms of evil that break in upon men and bring them

And Jesus replied and said, A certain man went down from [g]Jerusalem to [h]Jericho, and fell into the hands of [i]robbers, who also [j]stripped him [of his raiment], and [k]wounded him, and departed, leaving him [l]half dead. And by chance a certain [m]priest went down that way; and, when he saw him, he passed by on the [n]other side. And likewise also a [o]Levite, when at the place, came and looked [at him,] and passed by on the other side. But a certain [p]Samaritan, as he journeyed, came

g *cf.* Ps. 48. 2 with ch. 15. 13.
h *cf.* Josh. 6. 26 with Eph. 2. 3.
i *cf.* Jno. 8. 34.
j *cf.* Gen. 3. 10. *cf.* ch. 8. 27.
k *cf.* Prov. 23. 29. *cf.* Ps. 38. 4, 5.
l *cf.* Eph. 2. 1; *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 14.
m *cf.* Heb. 7. 28; *cf.* Heb. 8. 4.
n *cf.* Gal. 3. 10.
o *cf.* Heb. 7. 9. *ctr.* Acts. 4. 36, 37.
p *cf.* Jno. 8. 48 with Is. 53. 3: *cf.* Jno. 1. 46.

to desolation, yet which God uses to make them realize their true state before Him. The stripping off of raiment is the loss of all with which we cover from ourselves the nakedness which from God we cannot hide. A wounded conscience, the consciousness of impotence—"ungodly and without strength"—with the shadow of that death, which is awful banishment from the Life of life, stealing over the soul,—this is a picture true in every part of its tale of misery, the faithful representation of a convicted man.

Who shall be neighbor now to one in this condition? who is there with will and power to help? The Jew, Moses' disciple, is brought before us in two illustrative witnesses: "the testimony of two men is true;" and the priest and Levite are good representatives, if any are, of the help the ministers of law can give.

The priest is the first example; but one fatal phrase disqualifies him at the outset,—"*By chance* a certain priest went down that way." It is plain what such a word means upon the lips that are speaking here. It means that the Jewish priest was not the divinely provided minister for this condition. The message of law, "this do and thou shalt live," is no gospel for any who could be pictured by this helpless and dying man. True, it could say also, "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive:" and here salvation is proposed, but a self-wrought one, still containing the fatal principle. And even the sacrifices, though they proclaimed a God who forgave iniquity, transgression, and sin, left untouched what He Himself had joined with this, "who can by no means clear the guilty." The old page might indeed be blotted out, but only that a new one might be turned, and the vain work begin again. Thus still the veil hung before the face of God: "None can see Me and live," was His own affirmation.

So the priest went by on the other side, and had no help. "Likewise also a Levite, when at the place, came and looked at him, and passed by on the other side."

The same inability,—the same chance visit, no divine messenger; only the Levite comes nearer, peers into the anguished eyes, for a moment lighted up with transient hope, and then he too passes by on the other side.

Thus the ministers of the law declare only the helplessness of the law for salvation, and to emphasize this the more the actual savior is pictured as a Samaritan, a man not merely most distasteful to the Jew as a schismatic, but actually under the condemnation of the law itself. This the true Saviour must needs be: for the curse of the law, denounced on sin, must be really taken for men, if the law is to be maintained in honor, and the sinner saved. And here the antitypical Samaritan is therefore the One who has heart for men and the Witness of what is in the Divine Heart towards them. It is this that is the glory of the gospel. The law cannot bring God nigh, for such as we are. The gospel exhibits Him as come down in His love to seek the lost. This, because of its infinite value for us, is afterwards developed at length in the three parables of the fifteenth chapter, where the whole Triune God is seen in the "joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Here it is Christ whom we see in this Samaritan, who "as he journeyed, came where" the wounded man "was, and when he saw him, had compassion on him."

[q] where he was, and when he saw him, he had [r] compassion [on him,] and went to him, and [s] bound up his wounds, pouring in [t] oil and [u] wine; and raised him up upon his [v] own beast, and brought him to an [w] inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow [as he departed,]* he took out [x] two pence,† and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take [y] care of him; and whatsoever thou shalt spend [z] more, when I [a] come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these three seems to thee to have been [b] neighbor to him who fell into [the hands of] the robbers? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. And Jesus said unto him, Go and do [c] thou likewise.

*Many omit. †"Denarii."

[q] *cf.* ver. 30 with Rom. 5. 6. *cf.* Heb. 2. 14. *cf.* Ps. 22.1. [r] *cf.* Mk. 1. 41. *cf.* Gal. 2. 20. [s] *ctr.* Is. 1. 6. *cf.* ch. 4. 18. *cf.* Rom. 5. 1. [t] *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 27 with Acts 5. 32. *cf.* Rom. 5. 5. [u] *cf.* Matt. 26. 28 with 1 Jno. 1. 7. [v] *cf.* Gen. 24. 61. *cf.* Rom. 5. 9, 10. [w] *cf.* Heb. 13. 14; *ctr.* ch. 2. 7. [x] *cf.* 2 Pet. 1. 3. [y] *cf.* Jno. 21. 15–17; *cf.* Acts 20. 28; *cf.* Heb. 13. 17. [z] *cf.* Philem. 18, 19; *cf.* Jno. 1. 16. [a] *cf.* Jno. 14. 1–3. [b] *cf.* Prov. 17. 17. *cf.* Prov. 27. 10; *cf.* Rom. 5. 7, 8. [c] *cf.* ch. 14. 21; *cf.* Acts 26. 17, 18.

The details that follow are again clear and significant, and present the grace of Christ in the fullest way. Faith's appropriation of the blessing, true as it is from the human side, is not what we find here, but rather the appropriation is on the divine side, all the value of the work of Christ made over to the helpless and stricken soul. He is taken into tender hands, and his wounds closed or bound up by the authoritative Word of God: for it is the Word which binds the conscience, and here for healing, as when the sweet compelling utterance of "peace" from a Saviour's lips made rest but duty for those that heard it.

The oil and the wine follow for effectual healing: they are plain symbols of the joyful remembrance of Christ's work—of His precious blood—applied in the power of the Holy Spirit. And here there is such unmistakable plainness, as if no manner of doubt must be permitted upon so fundamental a point. And now he is ready for the road with his deliverer.

The tender care of the latter does not slacken. He lifts him up upon his own beast,—κτῆνος, not often used in the singular, as here, "acquirement," what he had got for himself. The power which supports and carries us on is indeed what Christ has acquired for Himself: it is living power, the "Spirit of Christ," which bare Him in His wondrous Manhood to our rescue, and who, that being effected, now bears us.

So "he brought him to an inn"—according to the blessed universality of the gospel offer, a "place of reception for all." This is what the Church as the house of God is; where still He "cares for" His own,—"takes charge of" them. How much is compressed in how little in these pregnant words!

Now we hear of His departure, though His care abides. And "as he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee."

It is to the care of the Spirit that Christ has left His people in the world: here it is impossible to go astray as to the interpretation. But what, then, are we to see in the "two pence"? We may equally with Van Oosterzee, refuse as "trifling" the thought of two sacraments, and yet believe that there is meaning, here as elsewhere. The two pence are plainly recompense for care bestowed, and we may find perfect fitness if we will note that in parabolic figures, such as we have to do with here, the Spirit of God is identified with His work, or with the agents through whom He works. We shall find as to the last a very decisive example in the "woman" of the second parable of the fifteenth chapter; and here it should be easy to see that it is to those by whom the Spirit works in the care of Christ's people that the reward is given. *Present* reward: for "he that watereth shall be watered also himself;" and yet a future recompense also,

3 (x. 38-42): The fulness of the saint's "good part."

3. And it came to pass, as they went [on their way], that he entered into a certain village; and a certain woman, named [d]Martha, received him into her house. And she had a sister named Mary, who also [e]sat at Jesus'* feet, and heard his word. But Martha was [f]distracted with much serving, and she came to him and said, Lord, dost [g]thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? speak to her therefore that she help me. But the Lord† answered and said unto her, Mar-

*Many read "the Lord's." †Many read "Jesus."

[d] Jno. 11. 1, etc.
[e] *cf.* ch. 8. 35. *cf.* Ps. 131. *cf.* Col. 2. 6, 7.
[f] *cf.* 1 Cor. 13. 1–7. *cf.* Heb. 11. 5, 6.
[g] *cf.* Mk. 4. 38. *ctr.* Jno. 11. 5.

when the departed Saviour shall return again. And thus the *two* pence (or denarii) may have the number of testimony, because the present reward is but the witness of that gracious remembrance of all that is done here for Him, which the future will exhibit in its full reality.

Thus, from first to last, the parable speaks with perfect clearness; and it is of Christ above all it speaks: *not* mainly to answer a lawyer's question, but beyond this to reveal Himself to the soul of a sinner, though, because of his condition, this cannot be done with the simplicity that would have welcomed need more fully confessed. In this way also it agrees with the place in which we find it, following the declaration of the personal glory of the Son of God with the revelation of His grace, and the full provision in it for the otherwise desperate state of man.

3. After this we are made to understand the full provision for a *saint*, and how it is to be acquired, and how earnestly the Lord longs to have His people acquire it, how thoroughly He will guard them in their possession of it. Here, for our better instruction, we have contrasted the conduct of two saints. Martha and Mary are again, and more largely spoken of in the Gospel of John, and in accordance with the different character in which they are presented here. As two sides of Christian character, they are both needful for its proper display, the worker and the listener, the servant and the one who, even because she better understands His real dignity, *lets her Lord serve her.*

It is easily to be seen that the latter is the fundamental necessity, and the higher blessedness. As sinners, as the previous parable has shown us, Christ must serve us first, or we should never find ability, nor have the heart to serve Him either. We would willingly reverse this order, but it cannot be. So too as saints we are prone to get our service out of place, and that because of the same root of self-sufficiency which troubled us as sinners. Served us, of course, He has; and now it is our part to serve Him; but how prone we are to do it after Martha's fashion. How little we realize the need we have of being served by Him all through, and the little need He has of us, save as the objects of His love, and as those in whom the exceeding riches of His grace are to be shown out through the ages.

Martha has received Christ into her house, and surely into her heart. If she is busy, she is busy serving *Him;* yet that does not prevent her being distracted by it. She is more: she is vexed and irritated. Mary her sister is sitting quietly at the feet of Jesus, listening to His word; and she blames even the Lord for permitting it, while she needs her help so much. But the Lord asserts that Mary has chosen the good part, and it is moreover the only needful thing: it shall not be taken from her.

But is learning of Jesus, then, the one needful thing? Is activity nothing? is service nothing? We may be sure the Lord is very far from meaning that. But if a man brings me, let us say, an apple, I do not despise it when I say, "The one thing is the tree that bears the apples."

One may hear Christ's words and never hearken. There may be even an occupation with them which is little better than mere idleness. But to hear as

tha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things. But [h] one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen the [i] good part, which shall [j] not be taken away from her.

4 (xi. 1-13): In view of creature need.

4. And it came to pass, that, as he was in a certain place [k] praying, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, [l] teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, [m] When ye pray, say, [Our] Father, [who art in heaven] hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; [thy will be done, as in heaven so on earth;] give us day by day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins, for we also forgive

h *cf.* Ps.27.4. *cf.* Phil. 3. 13. *cf.* Ps.86.11.
i *cf.* Jno. 13. 23. *cf.* 1Jno.1.3. *cf.* Ps. 119. 72.
j *cf.* 2 Ki.2.2. *cf.* Jno. 16. 22.
k ch.9.18,29, etc.
l *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 21. *cf.* Jno. 16. 7,13,24 with Rom. 8.26.
m *cf.* Matt. 6. 9-15; *cf.* Rom. 8. 26.

Mary did, that implies service also, and the right kind of service,—wisdom and power for service; and a service which shall be in the sanctuary also,—worship in the heart of it.

For what fruit will not grow upon that seed sown in the heart—the Scripture able to furnish thoroughly the man of God unto all good works? And how else shall we be able to gain and maintain communion with God than by drinking in the thoughts of God? On the other hand, it is easy to see, and there is plenty of sad experience to show, how service unenlightened by the Word may carry us out of communion with God; and how the cares engendered by it may, as with those of common life, choke much of the good seed. Yet if it is to be feared that there are more Marthas than Maries in the Church to-day, is it not to be feared that there are more than both of these united, of those to whom the cares and pleasures of the world are, far more than any service of the Martha sort, the causes of distraction?

Shall we not covet more that good part which with the Lord's approbation Mary had chosen? Have we not the power to-day to choose where she did? The portions that men naturally covet pass away beyond recall; here is that which the Lord Himself emphatically pronounces "good," and which He seals with eternity of possession to him who has chosen it.

4. There follows now, in that order which we have seen to be so constant in Scripture, after the fulness of the blessing provided, that recognition of creature need which makes the living God so absolute a necessity. We must do more than know about Him; we must have the strength of His arm, a resource in Him ever available. And this is what prayer expresses, the cry to One who hears and who answers. "The fervent, effectual prayer of the righteous man availeth much." The need of it is pressed in an epistle like Ephesians, where we are at the topmost height of heavenly position: it there, perhaps, requiring most to be emphasized that we are not above it. "Praying always with all prayer, and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph. vi. 18). There could be surely no more earnest exhortation, nor in a more suited place than where the height of all the blessing needs to be practically realized and maintained in daily walk.

The prayer that the Lord teaches His disciples here is that which we have in Matthew substantially, with certain omissions according to all recent editors, for which nevertheless it is hard to account. Certainly Luke it is who gives us the original form of the prayer, if the difference is to be maintained; as it is impossible to imagine the disciples asking to be taught to pray, if they already had been. Then in the sermon on the mount afterwards the Lord must have amplified the prayer by these added petitions, unless Luke can be supposed to have omitted part of what was first given; which again seems hard to believe. A reason for the omissions, if the larger form were first, is as hard to suggest. Nor, apart from all critical questions, can one well see the meaning of such a difference. It would be a bad argument to reason from one's ignorance; yet, on

every one indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation, [but deliver us from evil].*

And he said unto them, "Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go to him at midnight, and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine on a journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him; and he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee? I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his °importunity † he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And

n *cf.* ver. 11. *cf.* Jno. 15. 13.

o *cf.* ch. 18. 1-8, 39. *cf.* Rom. 4. 18-21.

*The shortenened form of prayer, leaving out the bracketed portions, has its argument, not from any preponderance of manuscript authority, but from the fact that while those which do contain it are among the earliest known, the use of the prayer as a form by Christians would naturally affect all but the earliest. The omissions are on the other hand not easy to understand, if there had been but one form at the beginning. Even in Matthew the closing doxology, now generally omitted, was evidently introduced from the ecclesiastical usage. The editors generally give the text without the bracketed parts, though the great majority of MSS. have these, in accordance with Matthew. Even so the two cannot be made exactly the same, Matthew having "trespasses," "trespass against us," though the difference is slight.

† Literally, "shamelessness."

the whole we may be pardoned if we incline to the fuller form, (perfect as we realize it to be,) as found in Matthew. There it has already been before us, and there would be no profit in mere repetition.

The Lord adds an encouragement to perseverance which at first sight looks strange enough, but which must have therefore a lesson in this strangeness. How many arguments does the devil use, and which our own hearts assent to for their plausibility, against the continuance of apparently unsuccessful petitions. Yet if there be no more than this against them we are taught here to urge them still. And striking it is that the parallel suggested between the success of importunity with man and with God is one which seems as little capable of full application,—seems as capable of having serious arguments against it,—as any that could be suggested in this line. Nay, the Lord Himself points to the difficulty, while He presses the argument as if there were none. "I say unto you, *though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.*" Can we apply this to God? Not the motive, surely: God does not give to get rid of the petitioner; spite of which the Lord goes on: "And I say unto you, Ask, and ye shall have; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you."

Thus the Lord shows us that we may seek continuously, seek importunately, seek, as one needy man from another; although it might be argued, You are forgetting the difference between God and man. Difference there is, indeed; but we are not to use it to check the pouring out of our full hearts to Him. Be it so that He knows all before we ask; be it that we may be tempted to say with Job, "He is of one mind, and who can turn Him?" let us not heed arguments that would shut us from all the comfort of knowing that we have for our necessity a living God that hears and answers prayer. Ask as if He would yield to mere importunity. Cling to Him as Jacob clung, and say, "I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me." Ask until you hear Him say, "As a prince hast thou power with God . . . , and *hast prevailed.*"

Then the Lord goes on to speak of the difference between God and man, but which is all in His favor. If men that are evil can be depended on to give *good* gifts to their children, *how much more* shall your Father who is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?"

I say unto you, [p]Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. But of [q]which of you that is a father shall his son ask bread, and he give him a stone? or also a fish, and he for a fish give him a serpent? or if also he shall ask an egg, shall he give him a scorpion? If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is of heaven, give the [r]Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

p Matt. 7. 7. Matt. 21. 22. *cf.* Jno. 15. 7, 16. *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 14, 15.

q Matt. 7. 9-11. *cf.* Ps. 103. 13. *cf.* Is. 49. 15, 16.

r *cf.* Acts 1. 14 with Acts 2. 4. *cf.* Eph. 1. 13.

SECTION 2. (Chaps. xi. 14–xii.)

Confirmation in view of opposition.

1 (xi. 14-26): The strong one not divided, and the Stronger than he.

1 (14-20): the Kingdom of God come.

1. [1] AND he was casting out a demon, and it was [s]dumb; and it came to pass that, when the demon was gone out, the dumb man spake; and the multitudes wondered. But some of them said, By [t]Beelzebul the prince of the demons he casteth out demons. And others, tempting him, sought of him a [u]sign from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every [v]kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and house against house falleth: and if also

s Matt. 9. 32-34. Matt. 12. 22-30.

t Mk. 3. 22-27. *cf.* Eph. 6. 12. *cf.* Rev. 9. 11.

u Matt. 12. 38-42. Matt. 16. 1. *cf.* ch. 20. 2.

v *cf.* Judges 7. 22. *cf.* 2 Chron. 20. 22, 23.

He guards against the abuse of the doctrine of importunity. He does not want us to think that we can by our importunity wring a gift out of our heavenly Father's hand that is not good. In madness sometimes, perhaps, we might desire it; only, surely, in madness. But how can He refuse to give the *Holy Spirit* to them that ask Him?

Type of all good gifts this, the Holy Spirit. And John has told us that when the Lord was yet on earth, the "Holy Spirit was not yet given because Jesus was not yet glorified." We must look at what this implies in another place; but we know quite well that the *work* of the Spirit in enlightening, sanctifying, working all spiritual work in man, was needed then as now, and being needed, was found and enjoyed. And now that, in the Christian sense, the Spirit is given, we can still have, and are called to prove the way in which our Father will respond with fulness of spiritual blessing to the prayers of His people. How comforting is the Lord's assurance here! yet how it reproves us also! Here if we lack, "we have not because we ask not." Shall we be content to go without the fulness of what Christ our Lord has certified to us to be ours if only we value it enough to seek it from the blessed hand of God?

Sec. 2.

The provision of God for His people having been shown, we have now the opposition on the part of the enemy, who is moreover the prince of this world. Thus the world becomes a scene of strife just so much the more because the Prince of peace has come into it. The Lord prepares His disciples for this, warning and confirming them, and setting them in view of His coming again, when winds and waves shall cease. A great deal in all this part is similar to what we have had before,—especially in Matthew; so that we shall notice it more briefly.

1. [1] The substance of what is here we find in Matt. xii. 22–30. The man out of whom the demon is cast is there said to have been blind as well as dumb; and the multitudes ask, "Is this the Son of David?" But there is only wonder, and not conviction, and others refer the power over demons (which they cannot deny) to Beelzebul the prince of the demons. The Lord, addressing

Satan is divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out demons through Beelzebul. But if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your [w]sons cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges. But if I by the finger of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you.

2 (21-23): and Satan spoiled: two opposing ranks.

[2] When the [z]strong [man] armed guardeth his own house,* his goods are in peace; but when a [y]stronger than he shall come on him and overcome him, he taketh away his whole [z]armor† wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoil. He that is not [a]with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.

3 (24-26): the return of an unclean spirit.

[3] When the [b]unclean spirit is gone out of the man, he goeth through places without water, seeking rest; and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he is come, he findeth it [c]swept and adorned. Then goeth he and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in and dwell there: and the [d]last state of that man becometh worse than the first.

2 (27-36): The testimony competent, but discernment lacking.

2. [1] And it came to pass, as he said these things, a certain woman of the multitude lifted up her voice, and said unto him, [e]Blessed is the womb that bare thee,

1 (27, 28): the blessing of obedience.

*Literally, "court," put for the whole establishment.
†Literally, "panoply."

w *cf.* ch. 9. 49, 50.
x Matt. 12. 29, 30. *cf.* Eph. 2. 2.
y *cf.* Heb. 2. 14, 15. *cf.* 1 Jno. 3. 8.
z *ctr.* Eph. 6. 11-17.
a *cf.* ch. 9. 50. *cf.* 1 Ki. 18. 21. *cf.* Matt. 6. 24.
b Matt. 12. 43-45. *cf.* 2 Chron. 36. 14-16 with Neh. 10. 28-39.
c *cf.* ch. 18. 11, 12. *cf.* Matt. 23. 13-33.
d *cf.* Acts. 7. 51-53 with 2 Thess. 2. 9-12.
e *cf.* Jno. 5. 43. *cf.* ch. 8. 19-21. *cf.* Matt. 3. 9.

Himself to them, shows them that He has read their thoughts, and refutes them by the argument that then Satan would be against himself. But if this were the finger of God, then it was the Kingdom of God that had come upon them.

[2] The result in this case was the spoiling of Satan, whom it required power greater than his own to dispossess. And for Himself the Lord declares that He accepted no compromise, and allowed no indifference on the part of any to Him. It was simply for or against; and he that gathered not with Him was only scattering.

[3] But indeed there might be the case in which Satan had not been expelled, but merely left his house empty, to return when he pleased. As the Lord applies it in Matthew, it was indeed their own. Nationally they had reformed from their once constant idolatry, and were now swept clean and adorned, but hollow-hearted. God was not enshrined among them, as their empty temple witnessed. Satan then could come back, and bring with the old spirit of idolatry an intensity of wickedness never before known. The Lord does not say, as in Matthew, that it would be so with them; and the word is left for wider application.

2. We have now the competence of the testimony given asserted, and the reason assigned for its failure with them, in the lack of the spirit of obedience, the want of singleness of eye.

[1] A woman in the crowd that was listening to Him lifted up her voice, and said, "Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the breasts that Thou hast sucked." And He answers, "Yea, rather"—so it is, indeed, but there is a greater blessedness—"blessed are they who hear the word of God, and keep it."

It was in fact the central feature of Israel's condition, that with professed reverence for the word of God, they had crusted it over with their traditions, their "unwritten law," which they exalted above it, and so made it of no effect,

and the breasts which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

2 (29-32): a contrast; One greater than Jonah.

[2] And as the multitudes were gathering together, he began to say, This generation is an evil generation: it seeketh a sign, and no sign shall be given it but the [f]sign of Jonas. For as Jonas was a sign to the Ninevites, so also shall the Son of man be to this generation. The [g]queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and shall condemn them: for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, more than Solomon is here. Men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it: for they [h]repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold, more than Jonas is here.

3 (33-36): the illumination of the eye.

[3] No one, when he hath [i]lighted a lamp, putteth it in a secret place, nor under a bushel, but upon the lampstand, that they that enter in may see the light. The lamp of the body is thine eye: when thine [j]eye is single, thy whole body is light; but when it is evil, thy body also is dark. Look, therefore, that the [k]light that is in thee be not darkness. If therefore thy whole body be light having [l]no part dark, the whole shall be light, as when the lamp lighteth thee with its brightness.

[f] Matt.12.38-42. Jonah 1.17. Jonah 2.10.
[g] 1 Ki. 10.1-13. *ctr.* Is.53.2.
[h] *cf.* Jonah 3. 4-10. *ctr.* Mk. 15. 12-14. *cf.* Acts 7. 54.
[i] Matt. 5.15. ch. 8. 16.
[j] Matt. 6.22, 23. *cf.* Prov. 4. 25. *cf.* Eph.6.5.
[k] *cf.* Heb. 6. 4-6. *cf.* 2 Pet. 2. 21.
[l] *cf.* Eph.5.8-14. *cf.* 1Cor.4.4, 5. *cf.* Ps. 139. 23, 24. *cf.* 2Cor.4.6.

as the Lord told them. This is a condition of things which, as we know, has once more come about in the history of the professing Church, human nature manifesting itself similarly in all generations. It is striking, and shows the prophetic character of Scripture, that the Lord here takes occasion by the woman's words, to guard against an error which has assumed of late, in that body which has, more than any other, adopted and developed the traditionalism of the Jews, the most colossal proportions. Romanism has exalted the mother of our Lord above all creatures, and into a perilous nearness to Deity itself. In its cruder forms it would, by virtue of this human relationship to Him, exalt her in some sense above Him to whom she owes this exaltation. The Lord declares here the blessedness of the spiritual tie above the natural, and most distinctly characterizes this blessedness as that of those who "hear the word of God and keep it;" which Rome, as far as lies in her, will not permit. Good reason she has, surely, not to permit it.

[2] The last incident is recorded by Luke alone; what follows is in Matthew also, with some difference. In it He contrasts the spirit of the very heathen at Nineveh, and that of the Arabian queen of Solomon's days, with the people then around Him. A greater than Jonah was then among them, and as Jonah had been a sign to the Ninevites so would He be in His death and resurrection a greater sign; but they would not repent. Nor could a wiser than Solomon attract them with His wisdom.

[3] Not signs were wanting, but the heart to interpret them. God had not done what man would not do: He had not lighted a lamp to hide it from men's eyes, but that all might see and rejoice in the light. But whatever the light might be outside, the light that illumined the man within was his eye: his eye must be single, without any veil there, or the light outside would not light the lamp that could alone be light to him. But the testimony given was not insufficient. If the light *within* them was not darkness, they would walk in the full brightness of the illuminating lamp.

3 (37-54): Manifested!
1 (37-44): the self-righteousness of the Pharisees.

3. [1] And as he spake, a certain Pharisee [m] asked him to dine* with him; and he went in and sat down to meat. But when the Pharisee saw it, he wondered that he had not first baptized before dinner.* But the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees cleanse the [n] outside of the cup and of the dish, but your inward part is full of extortion and wickedness. Senseless ones, did not he that [o] made that which is without make that which is within also? But rather give [p] alms of what† ye have, and behold all things are clean unto you. But [q] woe unto you, Pharisees: for ye pay tithe of mint and rue and every herb, and pass over judgment and the [r] love of God; these things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Woe unto you, Pharisees, for ye love the [s] chief seat in the synagogues, and salutations in the market places. Woe unto you, for ye are as [t] sepulcres that appear not, and the men that walk over them know it not.

m *cf.* ch. 7. 36. Mk. 7. 3.

n Mk. 7. 4-13. Matt. 23. 25.

o Ps. 94. 9, 10. *cf.* 1 Sa. 16. 7.

p ch. 12. 33. ch. 16. 14, 15. *cf.* ch. 18. 22.

q Matt. 23. 23.

r ch. 10. 27. *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 10, 19.

s Matt. 23. 6. ch. 20. 46. *ctr.* Eph. 3. 8.

t *cf.* Matt. 23. 27, 28. *cf.* Acts 23. 3. *cf.* Ps. 5. 9.

* Literally, "breakfast."

† R. V. renders this clause, "of those things that are within" suggesting "giving from the heart," but the text is doubtless the correct rendering.

3. The Pharisees and lawyers are now put in the light, and searched out by it: an exposure, indeed, scathingly severe, and which rouses them to the utmost. The denunciation so closely resembles that in Matt. xxiii., which took place at a later time, that Van Oosterzee* supposes that Luke has, in fact, borrowed from this, and interpolated what was actually now said with it. But besides the natural difficulty of accepting what we should certainly object to in an ordinary historian, there is no part of what is here that we might not imagine to be borrowed; to be sure, with some changes. If we confine ourselves to the unchanged parts, these can only be found in vers. 43 and 52: too small a debt to be worth while to incur. On the other hand, that Matthew borrowed from Luke of what was uttered at this time has similar difficulty, and is rejected by Van Oosterzee himself.

Why may we not accept it as the truth that the Lord in His final judgment of Pharisaism repeated much of what He had said at the earlier time recorded by Luke? Why may He not, at the end of His ministry in Israel, have deliberately reaffirmed His former judgment of those scribes and Pharisees whose characters were so well marked? a double testimony suited to the solemnity of it.

[1] To the Pharisee the Lord's words denounce the self-righteousness which was their prominent characteristic. This failed in its externalism, as if God had made the body, not the soul;—the form, but not breathed the spirit into it. Instead of the excessive scrupulosity which this engendered, let them only be ready to impart to the necessities of others, and all else would be clean to them.

Then their scrupulosity in these minutiæ—tithes of mint and rue and every kind of herb—went with the great defects in things of great account, as judgment and the love of God.

With this, self-exaltation, which made them love the chief seat and public greeting.

While the hypocritical smooth outside, with the defilement underneath, made them like graves which rendered men unclean, without their being aware of them.

* In Lange's Commentary.

2 (45-54): the teaching of the lawyers.

2 And one of the lawyers answered and said to him, Teacher, in saying this thou reproachest* us also. And he said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers: for ye lay upon men [u]burdens grievous to bear, and ye yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers. Woe unto you, for ye [v]build the sepulcres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. So ye are witnesses and consent to the works of your fathers: for *they* killed them, and *ye* build their sepulcres. On this account the wisdom of God hath said, I will [w]send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall kill and persecute: that the blood of all the prophets that hath been shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation; from the [z]blood of Abel unto the blood of [y]Zacharias, who perished between the altar and the house: verily I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation. Woe unto you, lawyers: for ye have [z]taken away the key of knowledge; ye neither went in yourselves, and those that were entering ye hindered.

And as he said these things unto them,† the scribes and the Pharisees began to [a]press him urgently, and to make him speak of many things; watching him, [and seeking]‡ to catch something out of his mouth that they might accuse him.

4 (xii. 1-12): Tried and in weakness.

4. In those [days], when the myriads of the [b]people were gathered together, so that they trod one upon another, he began to say to his disciples first, Beware of the [c]leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

u Matt.23.4. *cf.* Acts 15. 10. *cf.* Gal. 5.1.
v Matt. 23. 29-31. *cf.* Matt.3.9. *cf.* Jno.8.37 -40.
w Matt. 23. 34-36. *cf.* Acts 7. 51-53. *cf.* Hos. 12. 10. *cf.* Amos 2. 11, 12.
x Gen. 4. 8-11. *cf.* 1 Jno.3. 12.
y 2 Chro.24. 20, 21. *cf.* Acts 7. 57-60 with 1 Thess. 2. 14, 15.
z Matt. 23. 13. *cf.* Jno.7.48. *cf.* Acts 4. 16, 17.
a *cf.* Mk.12. 13. *cf.* ch.20.20.
b *cf.* Matt. 16. 6-12. *cf.* Mk.8.14 -21.
c *cf.* Lev. 2. 11. *cf.* 1 Cor. 5. 6, 8. *cf.* Gal. 5.9.

* Or "insultest." † Some read, "And as he went out thence." ‡ Some omit "and seeking."

2 The doctors of the law He rebukes for their well-known laying on of intolerable burdens (see p. 215), which they would not even put forth a finger to remove. They built also the sepulcres of the prophets whom their fathers had killed, and honored those whose living voices disturbed men's consciences no longer. Tested by new prophets, they would act as their fathers did, and bring upon themselves the gathering vengeance for all righteous blood from the beginning. Again, as professors of knowledge, they had taken away the very key of it, and, not entering in by it themselves, had only hindered those who were ready to enter.

4. What has been said with regard to the connection of the address to the Pharisees and lawyers with Matt. xxiii. may be and has been said as to the connection of the present chapter with the tenth and other parts of Matthew. That Luke does not always preserve the order of time or the historical connection of events or words may be freely admitted, nor does he here give as definitely as in the last case the time or times of these sayings of the Lord. After the most searching investigation that we can give to such matters, Van Oosterzee allows that definite certainty will, probably, be impossible. If it could be, we would have to ask, would there be any particular profit in such knowledge? It is hard to imagine what. We have the Gospels in the form the Spirit of God has been pleased to give them, and shall surely find divine wisdom in this as elsewhere in Scripture. When it leads commentators to talk of "heterogeneous elements of discourse," we can realize the dangers of too much theorizing in things unknown. We shall do well to take it as we find it, assured that none can mend what needs no mending, and that "to this man will I look," saith the Lord,

But there is nothing [d]covered up, that shall not be revealed, nor hid that shall not be known: therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light, and what ye have spoken in the ear in chambers shall be proclaimed upon the housetops. But I say unto you, my friends, [e]Fear not them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will show you whom ye shall fear: Fear him who, after he hath killed hath authority to [f]cast into hell;* yea, I say unto you, Fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings†? and not one of them is forgotten before God. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. [g]Fear not, therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows. But I say unto you, Whosoever shall [h]confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God; but he that shall deny me before men shall be [i]denied before the angels of God. And whosoever shall say a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but to him that [j]blasphemeth against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven. But when they shall [k]bring you before the synagogues and rulers and the authorities, be not anxious how or what ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

*Greek, "Gehenna." †"Assaria."

[d] ch. 8. 17. Matt. 10. 26. *cf.* Rom. 2. 16.

[e] Matt. 10. 28. *cf.* Is. 8. 12. *cf.* Acts 4. 23-31. *cf.* 1 Pet. 3. 14, 15.

[f] *cf.* Matt. 25. 41. *cf.* ch. 16. 22, 23. *cf.* Rev. 19. 20.

[g] Matt. 10. 29-31. *cf.* ver. 4.

[h] Matt. 10. 32, 33. Mk. 8. 38. *cf.* Rom. 1. 16. *cf.* Rom. 10. 9, 10.

[i] *cf.* Matt. 7. 23. *cf.* 2 Tim. 2. 12.

[j] Matt. 12. 31, 32. Mk. 3. 28-30.

[k] Matt. 10. 19, 20. Mk. 13. 11. *cf.* Acts 4. 5-12.

"even to him that is lowly and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at My word" (Isa. lxvi. 2).

In that which is now before us disciples are addressed, in view of such a condition of things as what has gone before implies. The multitudes are crowding after Him, so that they tread one upon another, and it was at just such times that the Lord's warning voice was almost certain to be heard, to break the spell of that seductive influence which apparent popularity was so apt to exert over the minds of His real followers. The multitudes were under the sway of the Pharisees, as we know, and their pretentious religiousness helped to maintain them in this place. The Lord warns them against "the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy," and puts them in the light of that coming day when all disguise will be stripped off, and what may have been spoken in privacy in the chamber will be proclaimed openly as on the house-tops.

But fear in the presence of the multitude might be as potent a governing principle as the love of power or applause. He exhorts them, therefore, not to be afraid of those whose power was confined at most to the body and the present life, but to fear Him who could not only kill the body, but cast afterwards into hell.

Then He reminds them of His care and tenderness, with whom not a sparrow is forgotten, and who numbers the hairs of their head. *They* need not fear, who were more to God than many sparrows.

Then He calls for confession of Himself before men, and they would be confessed by Him before the angels of God; but those who denied Him before men must look to be denied also before the angels. Yet a word spoken against the Son of man should be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Holy Spirit—as in the malevolent imputing of power that they could not deny to Satan,—that would not be forgiven. It was the sign of malignant enmity to God manifested openly as God.

5 (xii. 13-32): Man with God, for evil or for good.
1 (13-21): independency of God.

5. [1] And one of the multitude said unto him, Teacher, speak to my brother to divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, Man, who appointed me a [l]judge or a divider over you? And he said unto them, Take heed and guard yourselves from all [m]covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things that he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The land of a certain rich man brought forth abundantly. And he reasoned within himself, saying, What shall I do? for I have not [n]room where to lay up my fruits. And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there will I lay up all my produce and my goods. And I will say to my soul, [o]Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Senseless one, [p]this night shall thy soul be required from thee; and whose shall those things be which thou hast prepared? So is he who [q]layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God.

2 (22-31): dependent faith.

[2] And he said to his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Be not [r]anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, nor for the body, what ye shall put on: for the life is more than food, and the body than clothing. [s]Consider the ravens, that they sow not nor reap, which neither have store-house nor barn, and God feedeth them: how much are ye better than the birds? And which of you by anxious thought can [t]add one cubit to his stature? if then ye cannot do that which is least, why are ye anxious for the rest? Consider the [u]lilies, how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothe the grass which [v]to-day is in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more [shall he clothe] you, O ye of little faith? And [w]seek not what ye shall

l *cf.* Jno. 12. 47. *cf.* Jno. 18. 36. *cf.* 1 Cor. 6. 1-7.
m *cf.* Eph. 5. 5. *cf.* 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.
n Ps. 62. 10. *cf.* Is. 5. 8.
o *cf.* Ps. 49. 6, 11-14. *cf.* Ps. 73. 3-7, 17-20.
p *cf.* 1 Sam. 25. 38. *cf.* Dan. 5. 20-29. *cf.* Jas. 4. 13, 14.
q *cf.* Ps. 52. 7. Matt. 6. 19, 20.
r Matt. 6. 25-34. *cf.* Phil. 4. 6, 7, 19.
s Job 38. 41. Ps. 147. 9. *cf.* 1 Ki. 17. 4-6.
t *cf.* Jas. 4. 14.
u Gen. 2. 5. *cf.* Hos. 14. 5.
v *cf.* Ps. 103. 15, 16.
w *cf.* 1 Tim. 6. 8, 9. *cf* Heb. 13. 5.

On the other hand, in the presence of accusers and judges they were to expect the Spirit of God to give them a mouth and wisdom: they needed no anxiety with regard to that.

Evidently, the theme in all this is a world that they must neither court nor fear, but before which Christ must be held up, with the Spirit of Christ to hold up those who did this.

5. [1] He goes on to speak of those to whom the world was all: not persecutors necessarily, but quietly enjoying it; God and the life beyond forgotten. He pictures such an one making his count of long prosperity and suddenly turned out of it into the presence of Him he had made no account of, and leaving all he valued here to whom he knew not. Folly indeed, but how common a folly! the independence of a nature fallen away from God.

[2] On the other hand, the dependence of faith is the remedy for all care, in the consciousness of the care of Him whose presence and power all creation testifies. Seeking His Kingdom—the maintenance of His authority over what was but His own, and whom they could call, "Father,"—the men of faith with their hearts in the unseen, would find the good of all else ministered to them.

eat and what ye shall drink, nor be ye of doubtful mind: for all these things do the nations of the world seek after, and your Father [x]knoweth that ye have need of these things. But seek his kingdom,* and [all]† these things shall be [y]added unto you.

6 (xii. 32-48): Watching?

6. [1] Fear not, little flock: for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. [z]Sell what ye have, and give alms; make yourselves purses that grow not old, a [a]treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, nor moth destroyeth: for [b]where your treasure is there will your heart be also.

1 (32-34): a gift that empowers for giving.

[2] Let your [c]loins be girded about, and [your] lamps burning; and ye like unto men that [d]wait for their own lord, when he shall return on occasion of‡ the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find [e]watching. Verily

2 (35-40): the expectant servant served.

*Some read "the kingdom of God." †Some omit. ‡Or "from."

x *cf.* 1 Pet. 5. 7. *cf.* Rom. 8. 32.

y Mk. 10. 28-31. *cf.* 2 Cor. 6. 10.

z *cf.* ch. 18. 22. *cf.* Phil. 3. 8. *cf.* Acts. 4. 33-37.

a Matt. 6. 19, 20.

b *cf.* Col. 3. 1.

c Ex. 12. 11. 1. Pet. 1. 13.

d *cf.* Matt. 25. 1-13.

e *cf.* 1 Thess. 1. 10. *cf.* Heb. 9. 28.

All this is simple to us, thank God. We have listened to such words from childhood, and they are not difficult to apprehend, whether or not we have drunk in their blessedness.

6. The Lord carries us on to what is the limit of the life of faith; not death, but His own coming. Death might come, of course, but we must not, and cannot, confound, in such words as we have here, one thing with the other. The whole thought is different, the blessing of the whole Church, and of the earth, and the glory of Christ Himself being connected with His coming. It is not that we know either when He will come; for the injunction to watch implies the reverse of this. "Watch; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."

[1] First of all, we have the assurance which permits the heart to go out freely after this. The gift of the Kingdom is assured to us as the Father's good pleasure; and this gift qualifies for giving, which, in fact, is but laying up treasure in it. There no possibility can be, of change or loss; and one's treasure being there, fixes the heart there also. (*See p. 93 seq. notes.*)

[2] The loins are to be girt up in readiness for removing, and the lamps burning, for it is night while Christ is absent. The whole attitude is governed by the fact that at any time He may return: His servants are to be as those waiting for their lord, when he shall return on occasion of the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh they may immediately open to him. The common rendering here ("from the wedding") raises a difficulty unnecessarily: for all other passages represent the wedding as following the coming of the Lord, not preceding it, and it would only be possible to say either that the passage here applied to *Jewish* saints after the heavenly ones were already united to the Lord (Rev. xix. 7); or that the figure was only in loose application to the facts. The last is not to be thought of: why introduce a difficulty so easy to be avoided? The former seems contrary to what is here; for we have seen that since the transfiguration the heavenly things have been more opening to us. Hence it is preferable to translate "on occasion of the wedding," which, while quite justifiable, removes every difficulty.

The blessing of those found in this expectant service is great indeed. The heart of Him who was amongst us "as one that serveth" is called forth in response; He will gird Himself, and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. Blessed be His Name, He is the same in heaven as He was on earth. How easy should service be to Him!

"Whether He come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, blessed are those servants." "The Romans divided the night," says Van Oosterzee,

I say unto you that he shall [f]gird himself and make them sit down to meat, and shall come forth and serve them. And if he come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. But this know that, if the master of the house had [g]known in what hour the thief was coming, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be dug through. And ye therefore, be ye ready: for in what hour ye [h]think not the Son of man cometh.

3 (41-44): the portion of the good steward.

[3] And Peter said to him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even unto all? And the Lord said, Who then is the [i]faithful and prudent steward, whom his lord shall set over his household, to give them their [j]portion of food in season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he will make him [k]ruler over all that he hath.

4 (45, 46): lapsed from service.

[4] But if that servant say in his heart, My lord [l]delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite the men-servants and maid-servants, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken, the lord of that servant shall come in a day that he looketh not for, and in an hour that he knoweth not, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the [m]unbelievers.

f *cf.* Jno. 13. 4, 13. *cf.* 1 Sam. 2. 30.

g *cf.* Rev. 3. 3. *cf.* 1 Thess. 5. 4.

h *cf.* 2 Pet. 3. 10. *ctr.* Rev. 22. 17, 20.

i Matt. 24. 45–51.

j *cf.* Acts 20. 28.

k *cf.* ch. 19. 17.

l *cf.* 2 Pet. 3. 3, 4. *ctr.* Rev. 22. 7.

m *cf.* Matt. 25. 30.

"into four night-watches, a division which the Jews had accepted from them. The opinion is entirely without ground that the Saviour here followed another division into only three night-watches. He says nothing of the fourth, simply for the reason that the disciples, from that, should note that His return was by no means to be expected as late as possible; even as He does not name the first, because it would weaken the whole representation of the watchful servants. The Parousia does not come so quickly as impatience, nor yet so late as carelessness supposes, but in the very middle of the night, when the temptation to fall asleep is great and therefore must be most vigorously combated. It may even tarry longer than the servants think; but, grant that it should not take place even till the third, or should come even in the second watch of the night, whosoever perseveres faithfully at his post shall in no wise lose his reward."

The Lord has a word on the other side, where the servant has somehow become "the master of the house," and the coming of the Son of man like the unwelcome visit of a thief. It would be needful for such to remember that the thief does not come at an hour expected, or perhaps the house would not have been dug through. "*If* he had known" only presses the fact that he does *not* know.

[3] Peter asks whether this parable is limited to the twelve, or applies to all. The Lord answers, not directly, but by giving, on the one side and on the other, the portion of the faithful and of the unfaithful steward. Responsibility attaches wherever there is trust; and proportionate to the reward of faithfulness is the recompense of unfaithfulness. The parables here, if we may call them such, are almost word for word those at the end of the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew; yet seem to have been given at another time, and the repetition of specially important lessons may surely have had its purpose in imprinting them the more on the minds of the disciples. (*See p. 232, notes.*)

[4] The only difference in the parable of the unfaithful servant is that instead of eating and drinking *with* the drunken, he is himself drunken, and the association with others is omitted. His portion is said also to be "with the unbelievers," as in Matthew "with the hypocrites."

5 (47, 48): the award measured.

7 (xii. 49–59): The conclusion.
1 (49, 50): the purpose of God.
2 (51–53): the division resulting.

5 And that servant who *n* knew his lord's will, and prepared not [himself], nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many [stripes], but he who knew not, but did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with *o* few. And to whomsoever *p* much is given, from him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

7. 1 I came to cast *q* fire on the earth; and what will I, if it hath been already kindled? But I have a *r* baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished.

2 Suppose ye that I have come to give *s* peace upon earth? I tell you, nay; but rather division. For from this time there shall be five in one house divided: *t* three shall be divided against two, and two against three: father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against mother; mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

n *cf.* Num. 15. 30, 31. *cf.* Jas. 4. 17. *cf.* Heb. 10. 28, 29.
o *cf.* Lev. 5. 17. *cf.* Rom. 2. 12.
p *cf.* Lev. 4. 22. *cf.* 2 Sa. 12. 7–10. *cf.* Gen. 39. 8, 9.
q *cf.* ch. 3. 16, 17. *cf.* Mal. 3. 2, 3. *cf.* vers 51, etc.
r *cf.* Mk. 10. 38. *cf.* ch. 9. 51.
s Matt. 10. 34–36. *cf.* Gal. 5. 11. *cf.* ch. 19. 38.
t Mi. 7. 5, 6. *cf.* ch. 14. 26.

5 There is added here, as not in Matthew, the statement as to the gradation of penalty according to the measure of knowledge of his lord's will on the part of the servant. On the other hand, the want of knowledge, since it was capable of being obtained, does not secure the offender. Indeed the smiting of fellow-servants and the drinking until drunken could not be excused after that manner. The common conscience of men is sufficient to condemn the grossness of what is often done by professing Christians without apparent check from their religion.

7. The Lord closes now with putting the purpose of God in connection with its present effects among men. These in fact were very different. The Prince of peace had brought a sword. Israel, so long identified with the revelation of God to men,—from which salvation was to come for men,—was nevertheless to be set aside. Yet His purposes moved on, spite of all this, to their accomplishment, and the signs were already in the world, though they might be blind to them.

1 Christ had come to cast fire upon earth. The holiness of God was to be manifested; nay, already the effects of it were showing themselves: the fire was being kindled among men. The grace in which it was displayed did not alter this, for grace in no wise means tolerance of sin. Alas, men could little bear the exposure of it: "The world hateth Me," said the divine Speaker here, "because I testify of it that its works are evil" (John vii. 7). Thus the fire that would have purified, consumed.

And of Him holiness required the baptism of suffering that was before Him, before His full heart, otherwise straitened, could be poured out as He longed to pour it out. He Himself must satisfy this necessity of the divine nature. Thus on God's part there should be no hindrance to fullest blessing. According to the significance of baptism, these sufferings would put Him into a new place with God, a place of sanctification on account of His people (John xvii. 19), through which they would find a new and blessed place in Him.

2 But what would be the result of this as to men at large? Peace among men, in the union of heart with heart in the acceptance of it? No; but everywhere division, and among the most intimate relations of life; a man's foes would be those of his own household. "The world would no more endure faith in the Saviour than it did the Saviour Himself, who was faith's object, and whom it confessed. It is well to note how the presence of the Saviour draws out the evil of the human heart. The state described here is in Micah, the description of the most dreadful state of evil conceivable (Mic. vii. 1–7)." (*Synopsis.*)

3 (54-57): signs.

[3] And he said also unto the multitudes, When ye see a [u]cloud rising out of the west, immediately ye say, A shower is coming; and so it cometh to pass. And when [ye see] the south wind blowing, ye say, There will be heat: and it cometh to pass. Hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the earth and of the heaven, and [v]how is it that ye cannot discern this time? But why even of your own selves judge ye not what is right?

4 (58, 59): the failure of Israel.

[4] For as thou goest with thine [w]adversary to the magistrate, give diligence on the [x]way to be reconciled with him; lest he drag thee to the [y]judge, and the judge deliver thee to the [z]officer, and the officer cast thee into [a]prison. I tell thee, thou shalt not come out thence, till thou hast [b]paid the very last mite.

u Matt.16.2, 3.
v *cf.* Rom. 13. 11. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 18. *cf.*1 Chr.12. 32.
w Matt. 5. 25, 26.
x *cf.* ch. 14. 31, 32. *cf.*Heb.3.7, 8.
y *cf.*Jas 5.9. *cf.* 1 Pet. 4. 5..
z *cf.* Judg.6. 1, etc. *cf.* 2 Thess. 2. 11.
a *cf.* Matt. 18. 30-34. *cf.*Is. 24.22.
b *cf.*Is.51.17. *cf.* ch. 19.41 -44.
c *ctr.* ch. 23. 17. *cf.* Lam. 2. 20.
d *cf.*Jno.9.2.

SECTION 3. (Chaps. xiii.-xvi.)

The Gospel as manifesting God to man.

1 (xiii.): Righteousness alone barren.

1. [1] THERE were present at that time some who told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had [c]mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered and said unto them, 1 (1-5): "no difference." Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners [d]beyond all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I

[3] Yet God had not left them without witness, plainly to be read as the face of the heavens which they were so skillful in discerning. It was hypocrisy to pretend they had not what only their unwillingness to see rendered obscure. Conscience only was needed, the discernment of what was right. The signs given of God are of moral character, and the right is what appeals to every man; yet the appeal may be none the less in vain.

[4] Israel had thus failed as the witness of God on earth. Their own law had pronounced upon them; Moses, in whom they trusted, was but their accuser; while they were refusing Him through whom they might have been reconciled to him. The Lord utters still His warning, but with the consciousness in His heart that their doom was at hand.

Sec. 3.

We are approaching now the very heart of the Gospel; in which God is manifested in righteousness and love to man: His whole character is made apparent. But for this, man also must be manifested, in order that the suitability and necessity of God's grace may be seen. This is the theme of the first part here, therefore, that righteousness alone, man being what he is, can do nothing for him: judgment, and only judgment, is his portion. The second part (chap. xiv) exhibits God and man in contrast to one another; men seeking their own things and without taste for the things of God; with the consequences of this for those that follow Christ. While, thirdly, in the fifteenth chapter, all the heart of God is seen as towards man when simply lost, rejoicing in his recovery. The sixteenth goes on to the practical life of the disciple, and to the recompence beyond.

1. The first part lays the basis of repentance, and shows how far man's judgment of himself must go, if it is to answer to the judgment of God with regard to him. Here we have—

[1] First, very precisely, Paul's doctrine of "no difference," with which he opens the way for the gospel in his epistle to the Romans. They tell the Lord about the Galileans whom Pilate had slain at the very altar, as they were drawing near to God. He probes the thought of their heart by the question: was this, then, a proof that they were greater sinners than others in the sight of God?

tell you, nay; but except ye [e]repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, suppose ye that they were debtors beyond all the men that dwell in Jerusalem? I tell you, nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

2(6-9): "but if not"—the alternative.

[2] And he spake this parable: A certain man had a [f]fig-tree planted in his [g]vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none. And he said to the vinedresser, Behold, these three years I come, [h]seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: [i]cut it down; why doth it also render the ground useless? But he answered and said unto him, Lord, let it alone [j]this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it; and if it bear fruit, [well]; and if not, [k]after that thou shalt cut it down.

3(10-17): resource in God.

[3] And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath; and behold, a woman having a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and she was [l]bowed together, and wholly unable to lift herself up. And when Jesus saw her, he called to her and said, Woman, thou art [m]loosed from thine infirmity. And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight and glorified God. But the ruler of the synagogue answered

e *cf.* vers. 23, 24. *ctr.* 1 Tim. 1. 13-16.

f *cf.* Jno. 1. 48 with Ezr. 9. 8, 9.

g *cf.* Is. 5. 1-4. *cf.* Ps. 80. 8-16.

h *cf.* Matt. 21. 19, 23 33.

i *cf.* Ex. 32. 7-14. *cf.* Ezek. 20. 8, 9, etc. Matt. 3. 10.

j *cf.* Nu. 14. 11-14. *cf.* ch. 24. 47 with Acts 3. 26.

k *cf.* Rom. 11. 21. *cf.* Acts 13. 46.

l *cf.* Lev. 21. 20. *cf.* Deut. 28. 59.

m ch. 4. 18. *cf.* Ps. 146. 8.

and answers it Himself, that they were not, but that, except they repented, all would perish alike: there was not a possible one who could merit escape.

He adds another example, where the character of what took place might make it seem more like the special judgment of God Himself,—eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and slew them: were these, at any rate, "debtors" to the justice of God beyond all else of the dwellers in Jerusalem? and again He will not leave it to others to answer, but answers it Himself in the same way as before. The number 18, which is 3x6, speaks of evil manifested in its highest uprise; and note that the Lord says not a word with regard to them to lessen the thought of evil in them: that is not the point. On the contrary, make of it as much as possible, the lesson is only deeper. For the question is, *not*, were they sinners beyond others? but does the hand of God upon them *prove* them to be that? had they not been such, could they have pleaded exemption from divine judgment on that account? And to this He answers, No: judgment from God, and even to perdition, will come upon all, except they repent. It is the owning the ruin in which we are alike, which casts us, *as* sinners, upon unfailing mercy and brings out from under judgment: this, and this alone.

[2] He strengthens this by showing that the *delay* of judgment does not at all mean escape from it, but only that God *desires* men to escape, and would leave them the possibility of it. The alternative still remains: "if not, thou shalt cut it down;" the fruit of repentance must be brought forth, or sooner or later (if in this life even never) judgment must take its course.

Even this respite comes, not from comparative betterness, but through a Mediator. It is not that there is some little fruit, but let it alone till all means are exhausted that may produce fruit. It is the plea of mercy only that could avail for any; and the fruit of repentance must at last be found.

[3] Here comes in the assurance of the resource that there is in God for all that so turn to Him, though it be "without strength" as well as "ungodly." A woman bowed together so that she could not lift up herself, for eighteen years! Notice, once more, that sinister eighteen. Yet with Him there is no difficulty.

with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the
n sabbath day, and said to the multitude, There are six
days in which men are to work: in these therefore,
come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. But
the Lord answered him, and said, Hypocrites, doth not
o each of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from
the manger, and lead it away and water it? And ought
not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom
p Satan hath bound, lo, [these] eighteen years, to be loosed
from this bond on the sabbath day? And when he
said this, all his adversaries were ashamed, and all the
multitude q rejoiced at all the glorious things that were
being done by him.

4 (18-21): the kingdom in man's hand.
a (18, 19): in independence.
b (20-21): the leaven of falsehood.

4 *a* Then he said, Unto what is the kingdom of God
like? and to what shall I liken it? It is like a grain of
r mustard-seed which a man took and cast into his gar-
den; and it grew, and became a tree; and the birds of
the heaven lodged in its branches.

b And again he said, To what shall I liken the king-
dom of God? It is like s leaven, which a woman took
and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was
leavened.

n ch. 6.7-11. Jno. 5.9,10.

o ch. 14. 5. Matt. 12.10-13.

p *cf.* 1 Jno. 3. 8. *cf.* 2 Tim. 2. 26.

q ch. 14. 6. *cf.* Acts 5. 12, 13. ch. 19. 37, 38.

r Matt. 13. 31, 32. *cf.* Acts 20. 29, 30 with Rev. 18. 2.

s Matt. 13. 33. *cf.* Gal. 1. 6-9. *ctr.* 2 Cor. 2. 17.

"Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity." He says; and then His hands make His words good. She was made straight immediately, and glorified God.

But this produces indignation in the synagogue: for it is the sabbath; and a man must not use the power of God upon the sabbath day! What! the Lord says: is it to preserve the rest of God unbroken, to keep a daughter of Abraham in bondage to Satan? Notice the emphasis He lays upon this, that she is a daughter of Abraham. How unseemly for one who inherits Abraham's faith to be kept bowed together; and this is, doubtless, how we are to take Christ's plea for her, as in the case of Zacchæus afterwards (xix. 9). This perfects the picture: work there is none, but God's work, and the synagogue in vain would tie *His* hands. It was, in fact, but loud-voiced hypocrisy: for they had no difficulty in leading away their beasts to the water. They only prized man at less than the beast.

4 With this, for the time, His adversaries are silenced, and the people rejoice at all His glorious works. But the Lord repeats here two significant parables whose meaning we have already seen, but which gain a new significance from their new position. They are parables of the Kingdom not then begun, and carry us beyond Judaism into that which would indeed seem to show His adversaries silenced, and the people rejoicing in His power established.

Alas, what it does show is the likeness of human nature in all dispensations, the revival of the synagogue in the professing Church of Christ, and the consequent degradation of the divine in human hands. For these parables show us the Kingdom of God itself administered by man, and the changed form which is the result of this. In the first it is seen like one of the kingdoms of the world, and the ministers of Satan finding shelter in it. In the second the professing Church itself is adulterating the bread from heaven, to adapt it to the tastes of the world; in the end the word being leavened. Such is man; and in no way, perhaps, could he be shown more hopeless in his evil. Hope can be in God alone.

The weakness even of the saint is shown in these pictures: for the evil goes on without ability on his part to overcome it. For himself he may; but he has lost control of that which was committed to him, and cannot recover it. His very separation from the evil, which faithfulness to God enjoins, has to be in confession of the general ruin.

5 (22-30): judgment at the end.

5 And he went through one city and village after another, teaching and journeying towards Jerusalem. And a certain man said to him, Lord, are they [t]few that are to saved? But he said unto them, [u]Strive earnestly to enter in through the narrow door: for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the [v]master of the house has risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without and to knock at the door saying, Lord, open to us, and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are; then shall ye begin to say, We have [w]eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. And he will say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; [x]depart from me, all workers of unrighteousness. There shall be the [y]weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves cast out. And they shall come from the [z]east and the west, and from the north and the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And behold, there are [a]last that shall be first, and there are first that shall be last.

6 (31-35): the evil under control from God.

6 In the same hour came certain Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out and go hence, for [b]Herod would fain kill thee. And he said unto them, Go and tell that [c]fox, Behold, I [d]cast out demons and perform cures today and to-morrow, and on the [e]third [day] I am per-

t Matt. 7.14. Matt. 20.16. *cf.* Rev. 7.9.
u cf. Matt. 11.12. *cf.* Heb. 12.16, 17.
v cf. Matt. 25.10-12. *cf.* Gen. 7.16.
w Matt. 7.21-23. *cf.* Tit. 1.16. *cf.* Jude 12.
x Matt. 25.41. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1.9.
y Matt. 8.12. 2 Pet. 2.17. Ps. 112.10. *ctr.* ch. 7.38.
z cf. Mal. 1.11. Matt. 8.11.
a Matt. 19.30. Matt. 20.16.
b cf. ch. 9.7-9.
c cf. Ps. 37.12. *cf.* Mi. 3.1-3.
d cf. Acts. 10.38.
e Matt. 17.23. *cf.* Heb. 2.10.

Such then is man; and being such, all help, all hope, must be in God alone. "Cease ye from *man*, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" (Isa. ii. 22).

This judgment, seen and accepted in the Cross, is peace, holiness and happiness. Self is set aside by that which has made peace for us; and Christ abides as the One in whom we have acceptance with God, and the store-house, freely ours, of every blessing.

5 But judgment yet abides for those that refuse His grace, and the door of salvation is even a narrow one, for the many who would gladly enter the Kingdom by some way more gratifying to their pride of heart, or freer to the careless foot of those who would have God as careless. Nor would that door be always open: the Master of the house would rise and shut it; and then there would be many left outside, even of those who could plead outward acquaintance with Him, but no practical inward knowledge, still the unsaved doers of unrighteousness. Then would be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when they would see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of God, but be themselves shut out: and Gentiles too from all quarters would come and sit down there; the last being first, the first last: men's thoughts ever, naturally, the opposite of God's. But God's will stand.

6 The Pharisees come now to the Lord with an apparently friendly suggestion, but which, from His answer to it, evidently proceeded from Herod himself. "That fox" was but seeking in a round-about way to get rid of One whom he feared as well as hated. It is easily to be understood from what we have read of him elsewhere, that he did not want more blood on his hands of such a character as had already stained them. Yet the reports of the marvels done in what was his own kingdom troubled and haunted a heart in which, as is so commonly the case, superstition and unbelief held sway together. If he did

fected. But I must go my way to-day and to-morrow and the following [day]: for it is not permitted a [f]prophet to perish outside Jerusalem. [g]Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth those that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a [h]hen her brood under her wings, and ye [i]would not. Behold, your [j]house is left unto you! and I say unto you, Ye shall not see me until ye shall say, [k]Blessed is he that cometh in the name of [the] Lord.

2(xiv.)Man in contrast with and estrangement from God.

2. [1] And it came to pass, as he entered into the house of one of the rulers [who was] of the Pharisees, on the Sabbath, to eat bread, that they were [l]watching him. And behold, there was before him a certain man who had the [m]dropsy. And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it [n]lawful to heal on the sabbath, or not? But they were silent. And

[1] (1-6): the prerogative of good with God.

[f] *cf.* Ezek. 3. 5-7. *cf.* ch. 4. 24.
[g] Matt. 23. 37-39. ch. 19. 41, 42. *cf.* Hos. 11. 8.
[h] *cf.* Ps. 57. 1. *cf.* Ps. 91. 4.
[i] *cf.* John 5. 40. *cf.* Acts 3. 14, 15.
[j] *ctr.* Jno. 2. 16, 17.
[k] *cf.* Ps. 118. 26 with Ps. 24. 7-10.
[l] *cf.* ch. 6. 7, etc.
[m] *cf.* ch. 9. 11. *cf.* Matt. 4. 23.
[n] *cf.* Jno. 5. 10, 16, 17.

not want to commit himself to threatening which he might have to make good, he was more than willing that it should be done by others. The Lord shows him that He knew well his design, and that He was perfectly beyond the power of all that he could do. The power of God which was showing itself supreme over man's great enemy, and in tender assuagement of the misery which had evoked divine compassion in its behalf, could not submit to be thwarted or curbed by aught that man could do. It would go on "to-day and to-morrow,"—the two days of testimony in the face of unbelief; on the third day, He, the glorious Worker, would be perfected; and there is surely an enigmatic reference to resurrection. The mightiest miracle of all, not in power displayed only, but in its significance, would place Him for ever in manifest supremacy, with His work accomplished, all the power of the enemy but working out, spite of itself, the divine purpose.

For He knew whither He was going, not to escape Herod, but to meet the enmity of man where it had ever displayed itself most, where most God had, through the generations past, drawn near to men. Jerusalem had a fanaticism of hatred for the prophets which would be jealous of any perishing elsewhere. Then with a sob of anguish for His murderers:—"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth those that are sent unto her!"—He turns where His heart draws Him, to testify in face of the inevitable result following —"how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen her brood under her wings! and ye would not." So He and they must part, because they will: their house—no more God's house—is left to them; and "I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me, until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

2. The fourteenth chapter shows man, such as we have seen him, in contrast with God, and the rejection of His grace by man in consequence of the resulting estrangement of his heart from Him. The conditions of discipleship are therefore the readiness to abandon even the nearest relatives for His sake, and to take up one's cross to follow Him. The cost must be reckoned seriously in a world so adverse, and God's salt must not be allowed to lack its savor.

[1] Once more the sabbath question is brought up; and this time, by the Lord Himself. In it they would set God against Himself, and make His statutes prohibitory of the profit to men they were intended to secure. He takes this up therefore in the house of one of their rulers and a Pharisee. A man is there before Him who has the dropsy; and He asks the question which was not then for the first time asked, but which they had never answered, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath?" But they are silent. Then He makes divine power give the

he took him and healed him, and let him go. And he said unto them, [o]Which of you shall have an ass or ox fall into a well, and will not immediately draw him up on the sabbath day? And they [p]could not answer him again as to these things.

2 (7-11): the wisdom of humility.

2 And he spake a parable unto those that were invited, as he marked how they chose out the [q]chief places, saying unto them, When thou art invited by any one to a marriage feast, do not put thyself down in the chief place, lest perhaps a more honorable man than thou be invited by him, and he who invited thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place, and then thou shalt begin with shame to take the last place. But when thou art invited, go and put thyself down in the [r]last place, that when he who invited thee cometh, he may say to thee, Friend, go up higher. Then shalt thou have honor before all that are at table with thee. For every one that [s]exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that abaseth himself shall be exalted.

3 (12-14): a portion in resurrection.

3 And he said also to him that had invited him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy kindred, nor thy rich neighbors, lest haply they also should invite thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, invite the [t]poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed: for they have not [wherewith] to recompense thee; for it shall be recompensed thee in the resurrection of the just.

o ch. 13. 15. cf. Ex. 23.4, 5.
p ch. 13. 17. ch. 20. 26. cf. Matt. 22. 12.
q Prov. 25.6, 7. cf. Jno. 9.34, 40. cf. ch. 18.11. ctr. 1 Tim. 1. 15.
r cf. Phil. 3.4-7. cf. 1 Cor. 15. 9.
s cf. 1 Sam. 2. 7, 8. cf. Prov. 29. 23. cf. 1 Pet. 5.5. ch. 18.13,14.
t cf. ch. 15.2. cf. ch. 1. 52, 53. cf. ch. 7. 41, 42. cf. Is. 55. 1.

answer, surely an unbribed one: He takes and heals him, and lets him go. God has decided.

The case He puts to them, He had put before; and He puts it to show that they themselves had virtually decided it also, and that to make even a doubt of it was mere hypocrisy on their part; they made none if it were ox or ass, or the worth of these. But good with God has constant prerogative: He never tied His own hands, that He should not bless, though man, if he could, would do so. They lacked sincerity; but how far were they from God, who dared to argue for Him so!

2 He turns to the guests to press on them the wisdom of humility. Even in the world the man that exalts himself is often abased: but with God this is the constant rule. Man's way is that of self-exaltation: he cannot trust God nor see himself aright; he must be abased for blessing or abased in judgment. How the Speaker here in His own Person illustrates the contrast between God and man. How far He had come down! emptying Himself in a love that seeketh not her own, that divine fulness might be in Him for human need: a need which our pride forbids us to own, and would make the cross of Christ but foolishness.

3 Now He has a word also for the entertainer, bidding him seek his recompense at the resurrection of the just. For this, he must not invite those who can repay him, but the poor, the maimed, the blind. To covet what is spiritual, and invisible except to faith: that is not only permitted but enjoined upon us, though the recompense is but mercy, and the Giver One who never mistakes, and whose rule in exaltation and abasement, Christ has just now given. We are safe, therefore, in waiting for His approval; while the sense of His grace encourages the weakest to send his heart on there.

4 (15-24): God's offer testing man.

4 And when one of them that were at table heard these things, he said unto him, [u]Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. But he said unto him, A certain man made a [v]great supper, and invited many; and he sent out his servant at supper-time, to say to those invited, [w]Come, for all things are now ready. And they all began with one consent to make excuse. The first said to him, I have [x]bought a field, and must needs go out and see it: I pray thee, have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee, have me excused. And another said, I have [y]married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. And the servant came, and related to his lord these things. Then the master of the house, being angry, said unto his servant, Go out quickly into the [z]streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor and maimed and blind and lame. And the servant said, Lord, what thou commandedst is done, and yet there is room. And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the [a]highways and hedges, and compel [them] to come in, that my house may be filled: for I say unto you that none of those men that were invited shall [b]taste of my supper.

u *cf.* Rev. 19. 9
v Matt. 22. 2-14. *cf.* 1 Ki. 10. 5. *cf.* Prov. 9. 1-5.
w *cf.* Matt. 10. 6-8. *cf.* Jno. 7. 37. *cf.* Acts 13. 38, 39.
x *cf.* ch. 12. 16-21. *cf.* 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.
y *cf.* ch. 17. 26-28. *cf.* vers. 26, 27. *cf.* 1 Cor. 7. 29-33.
z ver. 13. *cf.* ch. 4. 18. *cf.* 1 Tim. 1. 15.
a *cf.* Matt. 28. 19. *cf.* Acts 1. 8. *cf.* Acts 11. 18.
b *cf.* Acts 13. 46, 47. *cf.* Acts 28. 26-28. *cf.* Rom. 11. 7-10.

4 Now, when one of those at table hears these things, his heart is stirred to say that he is indeed blessed who shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God: to which the Lord replies by a parable, to the effect that men do not think so, but when God opens to them the provision of His house, the invited guests begin all to make excuse. Their possessions, the relations upon which they have entered, these in themselves not evil, are made excuses for turning the back upon that to which as Israelites they had been invited, and where indeed they claimed to have a place. The Kingdom long looked for had come nigh at last, the blessed Servant of Jehovah had appeared, to make known to the guests that the appointed time was arrived, and all things were now ready. Nothing needed but to come and partake of the free bounty of God,—of a grace which required nothing but man's acceptance of it.

The leaders of the nation, their self-claimed representatives, were those who had treated thus the heavenly message. Grace itself was forced to turn from them to the poor of the flock, those in the streets and lanes of the city, "the poor and the lame and the maimed, and the blind." Poor enough, and with plenty of defects, the very evils of their condition were such as took from them the excuses which had been made by the others. "The blind had no field to view, the lame could not go along behind his oxen, the maimed had no wife who could have hindered him from coming; only the feeling of poverty could have held them back; but this feeling also vanishes, since they must in a friendly way be led in by the Servant" (*Van Oosterzee*).

Thus the condition of the guests, which stumbled the Pharisees, is accounted for. The publican and the harlot went into the Kingdom of God before these: for their knowledge of themselves as sinners, and their despair of self-recovery, made the Saviour of the lost to be fully suited to them. Repentance and faith were in their case friendly associates which took them by both hands to lead them to Jesus.

But God's provision found not in this way sufficient guests in Israel: "Lord, it is done as Thou hast commanded, and yet there is room." Again, therefore, is the word issued, "Go out into the highways and hedges,"—to the mere unsheltered wanderers, such as were, spiritually, the Gentiles,—"and compel them

5 (25-35): conditions of discipleship to be exercised about.

5 And there went great multitudes with him; and he turned and said unto them, If any one cometh to me, and shall not [c] hate his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his own [d] cross, and come after me, he cannot be my disciple. For which of you, wishing to [e] build a tower, doth not first sit down and count the cost, whether he hath wherewith to complete it? lest haply, having laid the foundation and not being able to finish it, all who behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man [f] began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to [g] encounter another king in war, doth not first sit down and take counsel whether he is able with ten thousand [men] to meet him that cometh against him with [h] twenty thousand? and if

c *cf.* Gen. 12. 1. *cf.* Deut. 33. 8-10. *cf.* Jno. 12. 25.
d Matt. 16. 24, 25. *cf.* Gal. 2. 20. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 10, 11.
e *cf.* Matt. 7. 24, etc. *cf.* Matt. 13. 20, 21.
f *cf.* Gal. 5. 7. *cf.* Heb. 6. 4-9.
g *cf.* ch. 12. 58, 59. *cf.* 1 Ki. 20. 11. *cf.* Prov. 25. 8.
h *cf.* 1 Cor. 10. 22.

cf. Jude 14, 15; *cf.* Rev. 19. 11-21.

to come in," (love's sweet compulsion,) "that my house may be filled. For I say unto you, that none of those men that were invited shall taste of my supper."

The last words, though speaking of the rejection on God's side of those who were rejecting His grace in Israel, their place given to the Gentiles, yet in principle remains true as to all rejectors, they shall not taste of God's supper. The invitation is now world-wide, and bears with it wherever it goes the responsibility attached.

5 There follow, the world being such as all this shows it to be, the conditions of discipleship. It is just when crowds are going with Him, and to these, that the Lord declares them. He had spoken in the same way before, but the repetition intensifies His utterance, and shows its exceeding importance. He who comes to Him must hate (in comparison with Him) all nearest and dearest to him, and his own life, too. He must bear his cross, and come after Him, or he cannot be His disciple.

Then He bids them count the cost of this, and draws two pictures: the first under the figure of building; the second, of a warfare.

A "tower" is something that is conspicuous and eminent as a building; and needs, on that account, a special solidity. It may be for defence; it may be for overlooking what is round it. Our Christian discipleship should have all these characters.

It will be conspicuous, in a world like this, just as far as it is Christian. The world is not something of an inferior sort, but the total opposite of Christianity. The Christian is a light in the world, a light which shines in darkness, and cannot blend with it.

It will be eminent: little need to say that, with the Lord's conditions before our eyes. Even the world recognizes the moral height of devotedness and self-sacrifice; though it will make large reserve when it is estimating this in the case of a Christian.

Then as to defence, the character of the disciple fully maintained shields him from how much temptation which the waverer invites and succumbs to; while the suffering to which he is exposed as such causes the "Spirit of glory and of God" to rest upon him (1 Peter iv. 14), power that is equal to every demand upon it.

Finally, the disciple it is who as such acquires the ability to see, the single eye being in fact that of the disciple, to whom Christ is the touchstone of every thing.

But this is a tower that costs much to build, from the point of view from which it is seen by one outside it. It will cost him all that the world holds precious; how much he will gain he is not yet in the place to see. He who

not, while he is yet far off, he sendeth an embassy, and asketh [i]conditions of peace. So then, every one of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple. [j]Salt* is good; but if even the salt has become savorless, wherewith shall it be seasoned? It is fit neither for the land nor for the dunghill; they cast it away. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

3 (xv.) The heart of God displayed.
1 (1-7): the faithfulness of the Shepherd.

3. [1] Now all the [k]tax-gatherers and sinners were drawing near to him to hear him. And both the Pharisees and the scribes [l]murmured, saying, This [man] receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. But he spake unto them

*Most add "therefore."

[i] cf. 2 Ki. 10. 4, 5. cf. Job 22. 21. cf. Col. 1. 20. cf. ch. 15. 1-24.
[j] Matt. 5. 13. Mk. 9. 50. cf. Jno. 15. 6. cf. 2 Pet. 2. 20-22.
[k] ch. 5. 27-32. ch. 7. 29. ch. 19. 2.
[l] ch. 7. 34, 39. ch. 19. 7. Matt. 9. 11.

attempts it lightly will surely find it beyond his power to accomplish; and he who does not undertake it in strength far greater than his own.

The next picture of discipleship views it as a warfare. A king is going to an encounter with another king: for you must indeed be as a king to meet the forces that are against you in the world. Moreover these are not merely irregular, guerilla forces: they are organized under a king of their own, the dread "prince of this world," with more than the power of this world in his hand, and more than you are likely to be able to meet, high as you may rate your competence. Here, surely, if you come to reckoning, all is against you: the case is more strongly against you, the result of failure worse than in the former one. You may be scoffed at if you begin to build and are not able to finish; but here it will be worse: provoke the animosity of the world against you, and it is an enemy that does not easily forgive.

Thus the effect of reckoning may seem mere discouragement; and so it is meant to be, from all mere levity, and from all self-confidence: if you are setting out in either of these moods, you may as well give up at once. If, on the other hand, you are in serious earnest, the Lord's words are meant only to cast you upon resources better than your own, and all-sufficient.

But savorless salt, of what use is it? just as little is discipleship without reality. Israel had been, in God's thought for her, such a purifying salt for the nations of the earth. It had become savorless; and God's new evangel had not succeeded in imparting to it the quality which it had lost. It could only be cast out. And just such would be the case with those who should now have merely the label without the reality of discipleship.

3. We now come to the very heart of the Lord's teaching in this Gospel, and turn from man and what he is, to realize the love of God towards him, in spite of, or rather, in view of what he is,—the heart of God told out in seeking and saving that which is lost. The three parables of this chapter unite in this: in each case what has been lost is found; in each the joy is with the finder; and in heaven, before the angels, speaks conclusively of Whose joy it is that is presented. The *three* parables again, in this connection, naturally suggest the Trinity, the Shepherd and the Father being in manifest agreement also with such a thought. The Woman does not seem so, until we realize that the Spirit is often presented in Scripture in the agents and instruments through which He works. The Woman then will stand directly for the Church, but still as the vehicle of the Spirit, and all parts of the chapter will be in place. Father, Son, and Spirit are all occupied with man; and he it is through whom the angels themselves become adoring witnesses of the "exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus."

[1] All the tax-gatherers and sinners were drawing near to Him to hear Him: this was the occasion of the parables and shows us the application of them as not to wandering saints, but to sinners truly that: the "lost," a deeper word used by divine love here than the Pharisees themselves, as to men in this life,

this parable, saying, What man of you, having a [m] hundred sheep, and having lost from among them [n] one, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and [o] go after that which is lost until he find it? And, having found it, he putteth it on his [p] shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, [q] Rejoice with me: for I have found my sheep that was lost. I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that [r] repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just men who need no repentance.

2 (8-10): the woman, the church.

[2] Or what [s] woman, having ten [t] pieces of silver,* if she lose one piece, doth not light a [u] lamp, and [v] sweep the house, and seek carefully till she find it? And, having found it, she calleth together her friends and neighbors, saying, [w] Rejoice with me: for I have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

m Matt. 18. 12-14. *ctr.* Rom. 3. 10.
n *cf.* Is. 53. 6. *cf.* Jno. 4. 7, etc.
o *cf.* ch. 5. 2, 17.
p ch. 10. 34. Jno. 10. 28-30. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 5.
q *cf.* Zeph. 3. 17. *cf.* Is. 53. 11. vers. 9, 23, 32.
r *cf.* Acts. 2. 37. *cf.* Acts. 11. 18. *cf.* 2 Cor. 7. 10.
s *ctr.* Matt. 13. 33. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 12.

* "Drachma": a drachma was worth about 17½ cents.

t *cf.* Mk. 8. 36; *cf.* Matt. 13. 45, 46; *cf.* Is. 43. 4. u *cf.* Zeph. 1. 12; *cf.* Ps. 119. 105. v *cf.* Ps. 50. 21; *cf.* Ps. 90. 8. w vers. 6, 7; *cf.* Acts 8. 8.

would have cared to utter. But these were murmuring, after their manner, at the Physician of sin-sick souls, for going after them. "This Man receiveth sinners," they say, "and eateth with them." It is then that in a parable He makes personal appeal to them. Was there any of them who if he lost but one sheep out of a hundred, would not leave all the rest and go and find it? Yet they wondered at the value of a human soul to Him! He was finding what He had lost: for they were His; He was Maker and owner of them indeed, become shepherd in His care for them; and He would not leave one such till He had got it back.

We see in this a character of these parables as an appeal to the different classes before Him: not meant therefore, to convey merely general truth but to specialize and apply it. The "lost" is not here characteristic of men in general, but meant to apply itself to those who in self-despair would take it as their description. The Pharisees would disclaim it as intended for them—would have resented it if so applied: they would discern readily enough for whom it was intended; while the poor outcast sinners, self-convicted, would find to their unutterable joy, that they were just those whom He, compassionate Saviour, could not suffer to be lost. All that followed was for them: the putting upon His shoulders, the bringing home with joy; His care too great to trust them any more to themselves for getting home. Then the reception, the gathering together of the friends, the angels, to bid them all rejoice with Him! He does not close without a word for the other class here: for, if the lost sheep was the sinner that repenteth, who then were these "ninety and nine just persons who needed no repentance?" Ah, there had been no joy like this in heaven over them! there never could be as long as they retained this character.

[2] The second parable is that of the woman, in Scripture the figure of the Church, the instrument of the Spirit. The lamp of the Word is in her hand, and she needs it in the darkness of the night, while Christ is absent. The "house" is the circle of natural ties and relationships; for it is not just a question of public preaching, but of that testimony upon which the success of the preacher after all so much depends, and for which the whole Church, and not any class or section of it, is responsible. Good it is to realize that every soul of man, covered with the dust of sin as he may be, and hidden in the darkness of the

3 (11-32): the Father's dead alive again.

3 And he said, A certain man had two sons; and the [z]younger of them said unto his father, Father, give me the [y]portion of [thy] substance that falleth [to me]: and he divided to them [his] living. And [z]not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and went off into a [a]far country, and there [b]wasted his substance in riotous living. And, when he had [c]spent all, there came a mighty [d]famine throughout that country; and he [e]began to be in want. And he went and [f]joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed [g]swine. And he [h]longed

x cf. Gen. 37. 3. *cf.* Gen. 44. 20, 22.
y cf. Gen. 1. 26. *cf.* Eccl. 7. 29. *cf.* Acts 14. 17. *ctr.* Ps. 16. 5, 6.
z cf. Ps. 58. 3. *cf.* Jas. 1. 15.
a cf. Job 21. 13–15. *cf.* Eph. 2. 12, 13.

b cf. Prov. 5. 8–14; *cf.* ch. 16. 1; *cf.* Eccl. 11. 9, 10. *c cf.* Is. 55. 2; *cf.* ch. 8. 43. *d cf.* Ex. 5. 7; *cf.* Ezek. 16. 27. *e ctr.* ver. 24; *cf.* ch. 16. 24–26. *f cf.* 2 Chro. 28. 22; *cf.* Jer. 5. 3; *cf.* Am. 5. 5. *g cf.* Mal. 2. 9; *cf.* ch. 8. 32, 33. *h cf.* Is. 44. 20; *cf.* Hos. 12. 1; *ctr.* 1 Pet. 4. 3, 4.

world, belongs of right to the King's treasury, and has the King's image stamped on him, though with sore disfigurement. Claim him we may, wherever we may find him, for God to whom he belongs. This general evangelism, we may learn from the parable here, is what is the mind of the Spirit for the Church indwelt of Him. Here too there must be friends and neighbors summoned to rejoice,—angelic onlookers who are in sympathy with Him who is always the glorious Seeker, and who sets in motion all the springs of love and pity that flow anywhere in unison with His own.

3 The third parable shows us the dead alive again, the subjective side, therefore, of this recovery of the lost, which the first two were incompetent to express. The sheep is simply brought back; the piece of money is unchanged when restored; but the lost son returns to his father, and in heart, though under the pressure of famine at the first. The parabolic veil also is thinner, and permits the affections of the heart to manifest themselves with freedom. The two classes seen in the first parable, lost sight of in the second, reappear and come fully out in contrast here, the mirror being held up before the Pharisee as never before, in the elder son.

Sons they both are. This, which has led some astray as to the application, is intelligible in view of Israel's relationship to God, as in Deut. xiv. 1: "Sons ye are of Jehovah your God." This, of course, must not be understood as if involving the Spirit of adoption, which they had not, nor what would be implied by such language in the New Testament. It involved of necessity neither new birth nor salvation. An adoption they had; and the Lord says to the Syrophenician woman, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs." Again in the parable which He spoke to the Jews after His solemn entry into Jerusalem, He speaks of Pharisees and publicans both as "sons," exactly as here. Those to whom He was now addressing Himself claimed this most unhesitatingly in their own behalf, and in a sense in which He could not allow it: "We be not born of fornication," they said indignantly: "we have one Father, even God" (John viii. 41.)

This relationship, though it might be only external, furnishes the basis of appeal in the story before us. External only it was, at first, with the younger son, and to the end of it with the elder. The prodigal naturally is the younger son: the elders of Israel were with the Pharisees.

This younger son soon shows where his heart is. The "substance" that he gets and squanders is, of course, his portion in natural things, that which God has in fact divided among men to use as accountable to Him who gave it, or perhaps to abuse in utter forgetfulness of Him. The far-off country which he seeks classes him at once among the many whose backs are habitually turned on God. Here for awhile he enjoys himself after the fashion of those to whom transgression has its own delight, in the lusts which yet consume and never satisfy. An end must come, therefore, in which not only his own resources are at an end, but a famine comes upon all the sources of supply. He is in a land,

to fill himself with the pods of which the swine were feeding, and no one gave him. And when he [i] came to himself, he said, How many [j] hired servants of my father have abundance of bread, and I am [k] perishing with famine. I will [l] arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have [m] sinned against heaven and before thee: I am no longer [n] worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy [o] hired servants. And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet a [p] long way off, his father saw him, and had [q] compassion, and [r] ran, and fell on his neck, and [s] kissed him fervently. And the son said unto him, Father, I have [t] sinned against heaven and before thee; I am no longer worthy to be called thy son. But the father said unto his servants, Bring out quickly * a robe, the [u] best, and put it on him; and put a [v] ring on his hand, and [w] sandals on his feet; and bring the fatted [x] calf, and

*Some omit "quickly."

cf. Job 33. 27, 28; *cf.* Rom. 5. 8, 10. *q cf.* Eph. 2. 4; *cf.* Tit. 3. 4, 5. *r cf.* 1 Tim. 2. 4; *cf.* Ezek. 18. 23. *s cf.* Jno. 3. 16; *cf.* Rom. 5. 8. *t* ver. 18. *u cf.* Gen. 3. 21; *cf.* Phil. 3. 9; *cf.* Zech. 3.3–5. *v cf.* Gen.41.42; *cf.* Rom.8.15,38,39. *w cf.* Deut.33. 25; *cf.* Eph.6.15. *x cf.*Gen.18.7; *cf.*Eph.2.14.

i cf. Jer. 31. 19. *cf.*Acts2.37. *cf.* Acts 10. 4-6.
j cf. ver. 19. *cf.*Lam.1.7.
*k cf.*2 Cor.7. 10. *cf.* Acts 16. 30.
l Ps. 32. 5. *cf.*Jer.31.6-9. *cf.* Hos. 14. 1-3.
*m cf.*Ps.51.4. ch. 18. 13. 1 Jno. 1. 9.
*n cf.*ch.7.6,7. *cf.*1 Cor.15. 9.
o cf. Josh.9. 24-27. *ctr.*Rom.8. 15. *cf.*Jno.8.35, 36.
p ctr. Gen. 37. 18.

too, where no man gives, but he joins himself to a citizen of that country, and is sent into the fields to feed swine. Sad picture of Satan's service, in ministering to men given up to their own lusts entirely, longing even to be as they are; thank God, (this is His mercy merely and the door of hope) thank God, in vain.

Now he comes to himself, and in his misery the thought of his father's house breaks in upon him. Alas, it is not yet his father; nor does he think aright of it either, if we realize of what it is the parable speaks. Bread there is there, to be sure, enough and to spare—abundance of bread in that Bethlehem, where our Christ was born, and whence He came to us: bread enough, but not for hired servants. No hired servant, as such, could eat the passover in Israel (Ex. xii. 45.) God has all children in His house, and service but for the free hearts who know the constraint of love in serving Him.

The prodigal is not yet in place to know this, and fain would be one of those hirelings himself. All else is gone for him; but he will go back and confess the sin which he committed, which has deprived him of the son's place (never really known), and after the fashion of man's humility, which recognizes not the worthlessness of such labor nor the grace of God, he will say, "Make me as one of thy hired servants."

With all this, he is yet on his way to his father. The father's love anticipates and effectuates the son's endeavor. "When he was yet a long way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him." Not a word of the confession intended has been uttered; not a question is put: "I *said*, I will confess my transgression to the Lord; and so Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." There is no reproof for the past, no stipulation as to the future, no condition in this free forgiveness. How it would spoil the revelation of the Father's heart which is to do the yet needed work in the soul of the returning prodigal, make the son a son, and deliver from all thought of that far country, save abhorrence of that which had carried him thither!

Now, in another spirit than that which dictated it, he can pour out his confession. "Make me a hired servant," he cannot say for shame. And the right acknowledgement of his unworthiness is cut short by the father's peremptory joy which bids, "Bring forth a robe,—the best,—and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and sandals on his feet." What he could not have pretended to as claim if he had never wandered is now his in the father's delight to have him back: Christ, the sinner's robe of wondrous righteousness, what can equal

kill it, and let us eat and make [y]merry: for this my son was [z]dead and is alive again, was lost, and is found. And they [a]began to be merry.

Now his elder son was in the [b]field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he [c]called to him one of the servants, and inquired what these things might be. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and well. But he was [d]angered, and would not go in; and his father came out and [e]entreated him. But he answered and said unto his father, Behold, so [f]many years I am serving thee, and have never transgressed thy commandment; and to me thou never gavest a [g]kid, that I might make merry with my [h]friends. But as soon as this thy son is come, who hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. But he said to him, Child, thou art ever with [i]me; and all that is mine is thine. It was meet that we should make merry and rejoice: for this thy brother was [j]dead, and is alive again; and was lost and is found.

y vers.6,7,9. *cf.*Mi. 7.18.
*z cf.*Eph.2.1. *cf.*Jno.5.24, 25.
a cf. ver.14. *cf.* Eph. 3. 21. *cf.*Rev.22.5.
b cf. Matt. 20. 12. *cf.* ver. 7.
*c ctr.*ver.18. *cf.*Lk.10.40.
d ver. 2. *cf.* Acts 13. 45. *cf.*Matt.23. 13. *cf.*Jonah 4. 1, 4, 9–11.
e cf. ch.14.7. *cf.* Acts 3. 25, 26.
f cf. Ex. 12. 45. *ctr.* ch. 17. 10. *ctr.* Phil.3. 4-7.
*g cf.*ch.19.21. *cf.*Mal.1.13. *cf.* ch.7.41-43.
h cf. Jas. 4. 4; *cf.* Rom. 8. 7. *i cf.* Ps. 16. 5; *cf.* Rom. 1. 21. *j* ver. 24.

it in the apparel of the angels as they shine in heaven? Then the ring unites the working hand to God for ever; and the feet are shod for all the way, whatever it may be.

"And bring the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and make merry: for this my son was dead and is alive again, and was lost, and is found."

Death is the food of this new life, for which in fact, that it might be, life had to be given. Such is the ransom price by which the prodigal has to be redeemed from the bondage of sin. And henceforth death is not merely conquered, but becomes the minister to a life in which the shadow of death is passed for ever. The fatted calf—or young ox, not immature but in the first fresh vigor,—the type of the laborer for God, is here the peace-offering, that aspect of the Lord's work which the Gospel of Luke expresses. The prodigal is welcomed into the joy of reconciliation and communion with God; but it is the *Father's* joy, let us still remember, which is all through prominent: "This my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found."

Every way in contrast with this picture, we have now that of the elder son; and it would be impossible, surely, for any one to mistake for whom it is intended. *He* has not wandered, is no prodigal, has no need of repentance, has never transgressed his father's commandment, is still in the field when his brother comes home; and then finding how he has been received, breaks out in indignation. Then another side of his character comes out: he himself brings it out. Music and dancing in his father's house: these are strange things to him. Joy over *him* there never had been such. He had had no privileges, not even a kid to make merry—not, mark, with his *father*, but with his *friends*. Could the cold, cheerless life of a formal religionist be more clearly expressed? He too is in heart away from his father, has no sympathy with the yearning of God's love over a sinner, cannot eat and make merry over the return of such, though his father comes out and entreats him, will not go in. What is the end of a breach like this? *That* the Lord leaves to be decided by each one in his audience for himself. But God keeps—can they expect otherwise?—to His own thoughts: "It was meet that we should make merry and rejoice: for this thy brother was dead and is alive again: he was lost and is found."

There is one thing here, however, which spite of all the rest has been supposed

4 (xvi. 1-13): The mercy as to earthly things permitted to the failed creature.

4. And he said also to his disciples, There was a certain rich man who had a [k]steward; and he was accused to him as [l]wasting his goods. And having called him, he said to him, What is this that I hear of thee? Give [m]account of thy stewardship; for thou canst be no longer steward. And the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: [n]dig I cannot; to beg I am ashamed. I

[k] *cf.* Matt. 25. 14, etc. *cf.* 1 Cor. 4. 2. *cf.* 1 Pet. 4. 10.

[l] ch. 15. 13, 30. *cf.* ver. 19. *cf.* Prov. 18. 9 with ch. 19. 20.

[m] *cf.* Gen. 3. 9-14.

cf. Eccl. 11. 9, 10; *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 10, 11. [n] *cf.* Rom. 4. 4, 5; *cf.* Rom. 5. 6.

to give countenance to the view that the elder son is the true picture of the child of God, or at least the consistent one. It is, that the father says, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." But to explain this we have only to go back to the beginning of the parable and to remember that the substance which the father had divided between them, and which the younger son had squandered in self-indulgence, could not be any figure of spiritual blessings, but, as already said, of earthly things. If, then, the prodigal had returned, that with all its spiritual gain did not reinstate him in the possession of what he had lost; it did not in itself restore the lost health, the forfeited possessions, the various good gifts of God which had passed away from him. On the other hand, the spiritual blessings which salvation brings do not become the possession of any by the careful or upright use of earthly things. And the witness of his own heart (in the case of the elder son) was that, spite of his own punctilious righteousness, the Father's house had made no music over *him*.

4. This leads on, however, to the next parable, in which, not the outside multitudes but *disciples* are taught how *they* may use even earthly things (even the mammon of unrighteousness) in such a way as that, when this fails, the "friends" they have made by it, may receive them into the eternal tabernacles. But here, notice, there is no parade of the righteousness of the one who acts after this manner. No, it is the very opposite: we have an unjust steward accused of wasting his master's goods, a thing which recalls to us the younger son of the parable before given, rather than the elder. And here is where we all begin naturally, although the Lord has something else to say of this before He closes.

But to begin with, all are stewards of God in the matter of those things with which we have been entrusted; and not one of us can stand before God on the ground of righteousness in our stewardship. Death—and this is brought out in fullest emphasis by the law of Moses—is the turning of man out of the place for which he was originally created, as having failed in it: and who is not turned out? Self-righteousness is thus impossible if we will listen to the teaching of nature itself, and above all of that law under which the Pharisee so securely sheltered himself. The "publican," or tax-gatherer, become a disciple, had owned his sinnership before God, while the Pharisee had refused to recognize it: and thus in the only way possible for man, the repenting sinner had become comparatively righteous.

The parable here is not however of the reception of a penitent, but of stewardship: of one under sentence of dismissal for unrighteousness, and of what he can still do in view of the future.

He does not hope for reversal of his sentence, but seeks how best he may subserve his interest when this has taken effect. If death be this dismissal, as it most evidently is, then in the application this refers to what comes after death; and so the Lord Himself applies it.

The steward is a child of this age, and his wisdom is that of his generation. It is not commended for its righteousness, but for its adaptation to the end in view; and in this respect the children of this age are *wiser* than the children of light. They pursue their end with more clearsighted consistency, while the children of light are often how strangely *in*consistent. The unrighteous steward is unrighteous to the last, and no plea to the contrary is ever made for him; but

know what I will do, that when I am °put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. And he called each one of his lord's debtors, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, A hundred baths* of oil. And he said to him, ᵖTake thy writings, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And thou? how much owest thou? And he said, A hundred cors† of wheat. He saith unto him, Take thy writings; and write eighty. And the lord‡ commended the unjust steward, because he had done ᵠprudently: for the sons of this age are for their own generation ʳmore prudent than the sons of light. And I say unto you, ˢMake yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that, when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles. He that is faithful in the ᵗleast is

o *cf.* Gen. 3. 24. *cf.* Rom. 3. 10-19 with Rom. 6. 23.

p *cf.* Tit. 2. 10. *ctr.* Gen. 39. 4-6.

q *cf.* Ex. 1. 10. *cf.* Gen. 3. 1. *cf.* Prov. 30. 24-28.

r *cf.* ch. 12. 54-57. *cf.* Deut. 32. 29.

s *cf.* ch. 11. 41. *cf.* ch. 12. 33. *cf.* 1 Tim. 6. 17-19.

t ch. 19. 17. *cf.* 1 Tim. 3. 8-13.

* The *bath* is about seven gallons. †A *cor* is equal to eight bushels.
‡ That is, the lord of the steward.

his wisdom as to the future is set before us for our imitation, the unrighteousness of it being distinctly reprobated and set aside in the words that follow the parable: "for, if ye have not been *faithful* in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?"

His master's goods are still in the steward's hands; and these are all the means that he has, as his words plainly show. Yet his authority over them seems only now to extend so far as concerns the rendering that final account that has been required of him. He is no doubt under jealous oversight now, as to any further "waste," such as has been charged against him; but, of course, if he is to render an account, he has authority to *call in* the accounts. Here he can do no harm.

So he calls in his lord's debtors to see how every one stands, and remits to each a portion of his debt, a thing which Edersheim remarks, was within his rights, though his motive in it was unrighteous. In mercy, and in his master's interests even, he might have done so; he did it in his own.* But the wisdom with which he made capital out of what was not in his hands is clear enough. The moral for disciples is, "Make yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that, when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles."

Certainly it is not meant that we can buy ourselves thus admission into heaven, or that God's grace is shown in permitting us to buy cheap. He gives, but does not sell; unless it be "without money and without price." And even as to rewards, love can reward only what is done from love. Yet love itself may desire, and must, the approval of Him towards whom it is felt, and so may covet the rewards of love; while grace permits us out of what is not our own to make "friends" that shall in this way welcome us in the habitations of eternity.

Thus to use what is so commonly as to be characteristically the "mammon of unrighteousness" is not unrighteous, but faithfulness in that which is Another's; and although it be in "that which is least," as such earthly things must be, yet even as that it may test and manifest the character with regard to what is the "true riches." A man's piety cannot be measured by his charities; but on the other hand it cannot exist without them, for "faith without works is dead." And he who seeks to satisfy himself with that which is not his own, but of which he is merely steward, will find the things that are his own proportion-

* Van Oosterzee concludes that it was his own overcharge that he remitted, and thus that he made his account right with his master, while he gained credit with the tenants. But this introduces much that is conjectural; and it does not seem that he had hope of setting his account right.

faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If, then, ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is [u]another's who shall give you that which is your own? No servant can serve [v]two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will cleave to the one and despise the other: ye cannot serve God and mammon.

5 (xvi. 14-31): The recompense beyond.

5. And the Pharisees, who were [w]lovers of money, heard all these things, and they derided him. And he said unto them, Ye are they who justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is exalted among men is an [z]abomination before God. The [y]law and the prophets [were] until John: from that time the evangel of the kingdom of God is preached, and every one forces [his way] into it. And it is [z]easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one tittle of the law to fail. Every one that [a]putteth away his wife and marrieth another committeth adultery; and he who marrieth one put away from a husband committeth adultery.

u *cf.* 1 Chro. 29.14-16. *cf.* Ezek.16. 16-21. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5.
v Matt.6.24. *cf.* Jas. 4.4. *cf.* 1 Jno.2. 15. *cf.* 2 Cor. 6. 14-16.
w *cf.* Matt. 23. 14. *cf.* Is.56.11. *cf.* Jer.6.13.
x *cf.* ch. 10. 29. *cf.* Matt.23. 27. *cf.* Prov.16. 5.
y *cf.* vers.29, 31. Matt.11.12, 13. *cf.* Jno.1.45. *cf.* ch.5.18-20.
z Matt.5.18. *cf.* Is. 40. 8. ch. 21. 33.
a Matt.5.31, 32. Matt.19.3-9.

ately unsatisfying. Even an Abraham, with his face toward Egypt, will find a famine in the land which God has promised and brought him into.

Thus the Lord deals with the side of righteousness; and He rules with a firm and steady hand. Grace does not relax the lines of government; and the throne of grace is a true and absolute throne. A servant may not be a son, but every son is a servant; and "no servant can serve two masters." God and Mammon are incompatible as that.

5. But that cuts deep; for the Pharisees are among His audience; and they, the zealous maintainers of law, are at the same time money-lovers. They deride Him therefore: for had not the law promised all temporal good to the man that kept it? From this it was easy for one that had never felt the hopelessness of man's condition upon that footing, to make the fruit of a man's own covetousness the token of his acceptance with God. They thus, as the Lord told them, justified themselves before men; but justification is not man's work, but God's: what human law allows one to judge his own case? when, alas, also, the world is in complete opposition to God, and what is esteemed most highly by it is with Him an abomination.

There was another thing. The dispensation of law was passing away. The law and the prophets were until John, and then the Kingdom of God was preached. Now every one was forcing his way into that, through the opposition of those like themselves who neither believed John, nor the One to whom he testified.

The passing of the dispensation did not mean that the law had failed. It could not fail: heaven and earth might pass rather than one tittle of it fail. It did not fail, when that to which it pointed came; nor when that was remedied which Moses for the hardness of their hearts had permitted, and the new dispensation perfected what the law was unable to enforce.

He gives them an example, which the former Gospels have insisted on more fully. Pharisaism had taken advantage of the permission of divorce to give sanction to a license against which the whole spirit of the law bore witness. Now all this was to be remedied. He that should put away his wife and marry another would now commit adultery; and he likewise who should marry a divorced woman. The exception given in Matthew with regard to this, and

There was a certain [b]rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, making merry in splendor every day; and a certain [c]poor man, Lazarus by name, was laid at his gate full of sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table; and even the dogs came and licked his sores. Now it came to pass that the poor man died, and was carried by the angels into [d]Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died, and was buried. And in hades lifting up his eyes, being in [e]torments, he seeth Abraham from afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he called and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue: for I am tormented in this flame. But

b *cf.* ch. 12. 16-21. *cf.* ch. 18. 24, 25 with ch. 6. 24.

c *cf.* Jas. 2. 5, 6. *cf.* ch. 6. 20. *cf.* Prov. 19. 1.

d *cf.* Matt. 8. 11.

e *cf.* Ps. 49. 14. *cf.* Prov. 5. 5, 22. *cfr.* Phil. 1. 23.

which is found neither in Mark nor Luke, is not really an exception: for the divorce only affirms the breach of the law of marriage which sin had already made in the case excepted.

Thus the law had not failed, but was only perfected in the Kingdom of God.

The Lord goes back now to illustrate the fundamental mistake that they were making by the contrast of two men, perfect opposites of one another in life and after death, but in either case with the reversal after death of the condition in life.

He pictures a rich man, so rich as that if the Pharisaic idea were right, he should have been in fullest favor with God. He is clothed in purple and fine linen, and passes each day in uninterrupted enjoyment.

There is a poor man at his gate, so poor as to be in beggary and starvation. He longs for the crumbs (the broken pieces) from the rich man's table; and the dogs—unclean animals for the Jew—come and lick his sores.

No evil is recorded of the rich man further than this, that he enjoyed himself to the full. Even neglect of Lazarus is not urged against him. Perhaps Lazarus may have got the broken pieces. That he remained a beggar is true: but is it supposed that a rich man is to feed and care for every beggar at his door-step? Nor do we read of anything to the credit of this Lazarus. Providence seems to have decided against him, and the law to have condemned him: for where are the good things the law has promised to those that keep it?

The beggar dies, and there is a marvelous change. Without any means by which to make friends for himself to receive him into the everlasting tabernacles, he is carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. A beggar, with everything against him as that, according to the law, gets a place that the best Jew in the world might envy him for. What has caused this? Not law, we may be sure. Not any need of making up for that pitiable life on earth by the after condition. The testimony of the law settles this fully, and would settle it as well for any child of man. Nay, his name, Lazarus, Eleazar, "the Mighty One the Helper" gives us the only key to the explanation here. Spite of all else against him, God the Mighty One, acting apart from law, and so in grace, has lifted him from that degradation in which he was to the place in which now we find him. He who has chosen Jerusalem, Jacob, Abraham, any other name in this line that you please to name, has chosen to do this—to display Himself in it: and who shall say Him nay?

The rich man also dies, and is buried. Again a marvelous, but now dreadful change! In hades—it is not hell, gehenna—he lifts up his eyes being in torment, and sees Abraham from afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. "And he called and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue: for I am tormented in this flame."

Abraham said, Child, [f]remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus likewise evil things: but now he is comforted here, and thou art in anguish. And beside all this, between us and you a great [g]chasm is fixed, so that those who desire to pass from hence to you are not able; nor can those from thence cross over to us. But he said, I pray thee then, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren, so that he may testify to them, lest they also come into this place of torment. But Abraham saith, They have [h]Moses and the prophets: let them hear them. But he said, Nay, father Abraham, but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent. But he said to him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, [i]neither will they be persuaded if one rise from the dead.

f *cf.* Lam.1. 7.
*cf.*Mk.9.46.
cf. Ps.73.7, 17-19.
g *cf.* Mal. 3. 18.
*cf.*Prov.14. 32.
*cf.*Jno.3.36.
h *cf.* ch. 18. 20.
*cf.*Jno.5.39, 40.
cf. Is. 8. 19, 20.
i *cf.* 1 Sa.28. 15-20.
*cf.*John 11. 43-53.
*cf.*Matt.28. 11-15.
*cf.*Rom.10. 17.

The language is, of course, as figurative here as on the other side is Abraham's bosom. All representations of what is beyond the present life seem to partake of the same figurative character, which is, however, all the more adapted to appeal strongly to the imagination. The final judgment is not yet come; the once rich man has, as we presently see, brothers upon earth who may be warned to escape that place of torment. Resurrection, therefore, has not come any more than judgment, but the wrath of God is already realized in suffering which can be most suitably conveyed to us in terms like this. The hope of relief,—of such slight relief as is requested here, is presently declared to be in vain, an impassable gulf (or chasm) unalterably fixed between the lost and saved, no crossing or mingling to be, even for a moment; no hope of condition changing after death, such as many entertain to-day, for a moment to be thought.

But the reason for the rich man's coming into that awful doom is what is evidently intended to be pressed upon us. The Lord has already declared to his disciples that whosoever loseth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal; and that, if a man come to Him, and hate not his own life, he cannot be His disciple. This, it is plain, the rich man had not done. This only it is that is affirmed against him: "Child, remember, that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things"—not "good things" simply, but "*thy* good things." He had chosen life on the wrong side of death, and lost it.

This loss is not merely that: for God cannot be simply passive with regard to sin, and the tormenting flame is the wrath of God upon it. Death is not extinction; nor, therefore, is the second death. All that we find in this picture is the very opposite of this: it is intense realization. And if the pang of remorse is the soul's judgment of itself, (such judgment as the lost may be capable of,) the judgment of God is other than this, and more.

Oh, then, for a voice to warn men! So thinks the poor sinner here. Companionship is no alleviation of this hopeless anguish. "I pray thee then, father," he says, "that thou wouldst send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren; so that he may testify to them, lest they also come into this place of torment." Even this hope fails: "They have Moses and the prophets," Abraham answers; "let them hear them." But he urges further: "Nay, father Abraham; but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent." But he said to him, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rise from the dead."

No fear that Moses should not receive due honor from the lips of Christ. These Pharisees with their strenuous seeking of a sign from heaven: these are they that dishonor Moses. "Take up, and read," disdainful Pharisee, and thou shalt see how Moses accuses thee of unbelief of all the signs that he has given,

SECTION 4. (chaps. xvii., xviii. 8.)

The Ways which result from the Experimental Knowledge of this manifestation, and from the world's rejection of it.

1 (xvii.1-4): The certainty of offences and the imperativeness of constant grace.

1. AND he said unto his disciples, It is [j]impossible but that causes of stumbling will come; but woe unto him through whom they come! It were profitable for him if a millstone were hung about his neck, and he were cast into the sea, rather than that he should be a stumbling to one of these little ones. Take heed to [k]yourselves: if thy brother sin against thee,* reprove him; and if he [l]repent, forgive him. And if he sin against thee seven times in the day, and seven times turn unto thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him.

[j] Matt. 18.6, 7. Mk. 9. 42. Rom.14.13, 20, 21. *cf.* 2 Pet. 2. 1-3.

[k] *cf.*Gal.6.1. *cf.* Eph. 5. 15. *cf.* Lev. 19. 16, 17. *cf.*Prov.17. 10.

[l] *cf.*Matt.18. 21-35. *cf.* 2 Thess. 3. 15, 16. *cf.*1 Cor.13. 6, 7.

* Most MSS. omit "against thee."

and which are fulfilled in Him that speaks to thee. Yet our hearts ache so often for something more, even with Scripture completed in our hands, and a greater than Moses speaking to us from it. Yet "all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink;" and out of all the host that did so, two men of those that came out of Egypt entered the land to which God was bringing them! So with the men that wanted a sign now, did they dream that when He whom they had devoted to death should come back from the dead, they would be found giving large money to the keepers of His tomb, to have it believed a lie that He was risen? So still, with their eyes tight shut, men cry for light.

Sec. 4.

1. God then has manifested Himself: no lost soul from its far off place of misery shall ever be able to challenge Him in this respect. He swears it even: "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth."

But while His word remains to testify for Him, how often, alas, are even His people found false witnesses! And among the ranks of professing disciples how many causes of stumbling arise! The Lord goes on now to speak of these in a way that shows His earnestness to have all stumbling-blocks removed from before the feet of the least of all. Whom men despise for their littleness, of these His tender compassion would have special care, and this He presses now upon His disciples.

Occasions of stumbling will indeed come: these are sad certainties in so sad a world; but that does not make them less grave, or easier to be passed over: nay, "woe unto those through whom they come." Better were it for one of these to have a mill-stone hung about his neck, and so to be cast head first into the sea, than to be a stumbling to one of these little ones.

But whence do occasions of stumbling most arise? To answer that, must we not ask, to what, then, above all are we witnesses? Failure here will surely be the gravest, as it will be that also of which men will most take note, and which the arch-plotter will seek most of all to get us into. Scripture, then, teaches us that we are to "show forth," even "in the ages to come the exceeding riches of God's *grace*." Grace characterizes the dispensation, as in contrast with law, the rule of the schoolmaster which preceded this (Gal. iii. 24, 25). What, then, can be so great a failure as to fail in grace? It is to this, then, that the Lord goes on with an emphatic "take heed to yourselves:" "If thy brother sin against thee, reprove him; and if he repent, forgive him." Some of the earliest MSS. omit "against thee," with several of the earliest versions; and yet it seems plain that it should be at least understood: for it is only a personal offence that we can individually forgive; and it is just these personal offences that we most betray inability to deal with aright.

2 (xvii. 5-10): Faith's increase in lowly service without thought of supererogation.

2. And the apostles said unto the Lord, [m]Increase* our faith. And the Lord said, If ye have faith as a [n]grain of mustard-seed, ye should say to this sycamine, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea, and it would obey you. But which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him immediately upon his coming in from the field, [o]Come and sit down to table? and will not rather say to him, Make ready wherewith I shall sup, and gird thyself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk; and after that, thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he [p]thank that servant because he hath done that which was commanded? I judge not. So also ye, when ye shall have done all things that were commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which it was our [q]duty to do.

m *cf.* Mk. 9. 24. *cf.* 2 Pet. 1. 5-8. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 3.

n *cf.* Heb. 11. 11 with Gen. 18. 12-15.

o *cf.* ch. 12. 37. *cf.* Rev. 22. 3.

p *cf.* Job 35. 6, 7. *cf.* Is. 64. 6.

q *cf.* 1 Cor. 9. 16, 17. *cf.* Matt. 25. 37-40. *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 9, 10.

3 (xvii. 11-19): The cleansed worshiper.

3. And it came to pass, as they journeyed to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were [r]lepers, who stood afar off. And they lifted up the voice, saying, Jesus, Master, have mercy upon us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go, [s]show yourselves to the priests. And it came to pass, as they went their way, that they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, with a loud voice glorifying God; and he [t]fell on his face at his feet, giving him thanks; and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answered and

r ch. 5. 12-15.

s Lev. 13. 1, 2, etc.

t ch. 5. 8. Mk. 5. 33. Jno. 9. 35-38.

* Literally, "add faith to us."

Love is to act in the reproof; and this is cared for by the spirit of forgiveness enjoined; while the holiness of grace is seen in the condition of repentance. But if it were seven times a day he sinned, and seven times a day he turned, saying, I repent, he must be forgiven. This, of course, could not happen in a case of discipline in the assembly, where fitness for the table and the fellowship of the whole are involved, and where the authority of the Lord in the assembly is to be maintained. Individually we have no such authority over one another, and the service of love is the best constraint that can be used.

2. In view of the difficulties of the path which the certainty of such causes of stumbling would imply, the apostles—named as such, as those to represent the Lord in a special way as leaders of His people—ask Him to increase their faith. He replies that to faith, small as a grain of mustard-seed, the sycamine tree with its strong spreading roots would yield obediently, and plant itself in the sea. But they must be servants in all this, not masters, nor thinking to take their ease and satisfy themselves before their Master was fully served. Having done all, they were still to confess themselves those who had done no work of supererogation, but their duty only. And this is the way, in fact, in which increase of faith surely will be found. When we are doers of Christ's work, and not our own,—not valuing ourselves upon the doing it, but lowly in spirit—then will the needed faith for all the way be found: faith is for God's way and will: we cannot expect it for our own.

3. The story of the cleansed worshiper follows this. Ten lepers, standing afar off, beseech Him to have mercy. He bids them show themselves to the priests, and on their way they are cleansed. ¶ One, and one alone, turns back to glorify God and give thanks for his healing; and he is a stranger, a Samaritan. It is

said, Were there not ten cleansed? but [u] where are the nine? There hath not been any found that returned to give glory to God, except this [v] stranger. And he said unto him, Arise and [w] go thy way: thy faith hath healed * thee.

4 (xvii. 20-37): The world without Christ and its ways till His return.

4. And being asked by the Pharisees [x] when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; nor shall they say, Lo, here, or there: for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you. And he said unto his disciples, [y] Days shall come when ye shall long to see one of the days of the Son of man, and shall not see it. And they shall say unto you, [z] Lo, there; Lo, here: go not after, nor follow: for as the lightning shineth, lightening from one part under heaven to another part under heaven, so shall the Son of man be in his day. But first, he must suffer many things, and be [a] rejected by this generation. And as it was in the [b] days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man: they ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was in the [c] days of Lot: they ate,

* Or "saved."

u *cf.* Rom. 1. 21. *cf.* ch. 15. 25, etc.
v *cf.* Matt. 8. 10-12. *cf.* Matt. 15. 24-28. *cf.* Heb. 13. 10-15.
w ch. 7. 50. ch. 8. 48.
x *cf.* ch. 10. 11. *cf.* ch. 19. 11. *cf.* ch. 21. 7. *cf.* Acts 1. 6, 7.
y *cf.* ch. 5. 35. *cf.* Jno. 12. 35. *ctr.* Jno. 16. 7.
z ch. 21. 8. *cf.* Matt. 24. 23-28.
a ch. 9. 22. ch. 18. 31-33. *cf.* Acts 7. 9, 27, 35.
b Gen. 7. 1-8. Matt. 24. 38, 39. 2 Pet. 2. 5. *cf.* 2 Pet. 3. 3-7.
c Gen. 19. 1, etc. 2 Pet. 2. 6-9.

evident he is not hampered by the law that carries the others away from Christ, although belonging to a like system. But Christ has by the deliverance realized become an object for his heart: he returns to Him a worshiper; the others remain in the dead ritualism centering in an empty temple, while he obtains open recognition of a faith in which God is glorified.

In fact these cleansed worshipers, worshiping neither at Samaria nor Jerusalem, and not in temples made with hands, but in the presence of God revealed in the Man Christ Jesus, are typical of the new dispensation coming in, indeed the heart of it. The mere human priests are gone: there is access through grace by faith,—a faith owned of God openly, all distance done away. Of course, it is not meant that the cleansed leper knew all this; but he foreshadowed it, Gentile as he was also, the nine Israelites having turned their back on Christ. It is to these, as one may say, that we now turn, to a people that have rejected Him, and that are now in the evils springing out of that rejection.

4. He is asked by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God shall come. He tells them that it has in fact come, and without being perceived by them. It was there, presented to them in the Person of the King, in their midst.

But as rejected, He says no more to them of this; but turns to His disciples, to tell them of the days of His absence: not of Christian times, but carrying them on to when Israel's long night would be hastening to its close; days when there would be disciples longing to see one of the days of the Son of man, but not seeing it. Rumors there would be that He was here or there, but they were not to heed them. The Son of man would come, but manifestly to all, as when the lightning lightens the whole breadth of the heavens. But first He would have to suffer and be rejected.

Again He passes on to the time of the end, comparing it to the careless days before the flood, and the similar days before Sodom was destroyed. Judgment came sudden, sweeping, irresistible, and so it would be when the Son of man should be revealed. The warning to one upon the house-top not to come down into the house is given, as in Matthew (xxiv. 17), but not the events with which

they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but in the day that Lot went forth from Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. After the [d]same manner it shall be in the day in which the Son of man shall be revealed. In that day, he who shall be upon the [e]house-top and his goods in the house, let him not go down to take them away; and he likewise who is in the field, let him not return back. [f]Remember Lot's wife. Whosoever shall [g]seek to save his life* shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose it, [he] shall preserve it. I say unto you, In that night there shall be two [men] in one bed: the one shall be [h]taken, and the other left.† Two women shall be grinding together, the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answering say unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, [i]Where the body is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

5 (xviii. 1-8): Vengeance for His elect.

5. And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that they should pray [j]always, and not faint, saying, There was a judge in a city, who feared not God and regarded not man. And there was a [k]widow in that city, and she came unto him, saying, [l]Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not, for a time; but afterwards he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man, yet, because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her perpetual coming, she distract me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his [m]elect, who cry to him day and night, and he [n]beareth long as to them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find [o]faith on the earth?

*Or "soul."

†A few MSS. and the Syriac insert here: "Two men shall be in the field: the one shall be taken, and the other left."

d *cf.* 1 Thess. 5. 2-10. *cf.* 2 Pet. 3. 10. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 8-10. *cf.* 2 Thess. 2. 8.
e Matt. 24. 17, 18. Mk. 13. 15. *cf.* ch. 18. 23.
f Gen. 19. 17, 26. *cf.* Heb. 10. 38, 39.
g Jno. 12. 25, 26. *cf.* Acts 5. 41. *cf.* Acts 20. 24.
h *cf.* Gen. 41. 13. *cf.* Jer. 45. 5. *cf.* Ezek. 9. 4-6. *cf.* Mal. 3. 16 18. *cf.* Zech. 13. 8, 9.
i *cf.* Gen. 40. 17-19. *cf.* Rev. 19. 17-21. Matt. 24. 28.
j *cf.* ch. 11. 5-9. *cf.* Gen. 18. 23-33. *cf.* Ps. 27. 13, 14.
k *cf.* ch. 5. 34, 35. *cf.* Lam. 1. 1-7, 12. *cfr.* Rev. 18. 7.
l *cf.* Deut. 32. 35-43. *cf.* Ps. 94. 1-7, 22, 23.
m *cf.* Is. 34. 1-8. *cf.* Is. 63. 1-6. *cf.* Is. 65. 9, 15, 17-25. *cf.* Rom. 11.

28, 29. *n cf.* Ps. 13. 1, 2; *cf.* Gen. 15. 16; *cf.* 2 Pet. 3. 9. *o cf.* Ps. 57. 1; *cf.* Nah. 1. 7.

it is there connected. Only we see from the next admonition not to seek to save their lives that enemies are in question. The final judgment would be as discriminative as sudden: one man taken in bed, and his fellow left; one woman taken away by it at the mill, and another left. They ask, where? and He answers, wherever the carcase is, the eagles (or vultures) will assemble; wherever the corruption is, the judgment which is to purify the earth will find it out.

5. That judgment will be the complete settlement of the long reckoning for the persecuted saints who have been so long crying to God under it, and as yet without the full answer which will surely come. The Lord illustrates by the parable of the unjust judge the good of importunity with God, and presses on all under all circumstances that men should always pray and never faint. God's patience is not slowness nor indifference, as the event will show. Faith may count upon Him. In fact, when the Son of man comes, the darkness is such as to suggest the question, Will He find faith upon earth?

Sec. 5.

The last section here closes with the consideration of man's being with God,

SECTION 5. (Chap. xviii. 9–34.)

Man with God: the conditions and hindrances.

1 (xviii.9-14): Self-righteousness and righteousness imputed.

1. AND he spake also this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were [p] righteous, and despised the rest: Two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, the other a tax-gatherer. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with [q] himself: God, I thank thee, that I am not as the [r] rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax-gatherer. I [s] fast

p *cf.* ch. 15. 29. *cf.* Is. 65. 5. *cf.* ch. 19. 7.

q *cf.* Prov. 28. 9. *cf.* Prov. 15. 8, 29.

r *cf.* 2 Cor. 10. 12. *cf.* Rev. 3. 17. *cf.* ch. 13. 2, 3. *ctr.* 1 Tim.

1. 15. s *cf.* Is. 58. 3-7; *cf.* Zech. 7. 5, 6; *ctr.* Ex. 34. 28; *ctr.* Acts 13. 2.

the moral conditions and the hindrances. It reviews in this way some things we have had before, but to emphasize some points of special importance in this particular interest, which for man is surely second to no other.

1. The first point here is that of righteousness; in which, however, the righteousness in which we stand before God is rather suggested than developed. Indeed, so much is this the case that the actual reference to it is passed over commonly, both in translations and commentaries. Here it surely supplies what would otherwise be a serious deficiency, when the object is to depict the true righteousness in opposition to the false.

The Pharisee and the publican, or tax-gatherer, furnish here, as so often, the contrast which He would present. He is speaking directly to "some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:" things which naturally go together. The two men in question are shown us going up into the temple to pray. The position that they take is taken before God, not man. As for the tax-gatherer, that is evident; no one would question it. But as for the Pharisee, though he compares himself with the other, yet he is not presented as seeking credit with men in any way: he is self-righteous, but not a hypocrite. That he prays, however, with himself, (or toward himself) shows how little in the presence of God he really is, even while he addresses himself to Him. His actual requests we do not hear; they are of no importance, even if we are to suppose he makes any. The whole of it that we hear is a thanksgiving for his own good condition; and here he forms a class by himself, in advance of those whom he vain-gloriously puts down as "the rest of men." They are "extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or like this publican,"—of whom the less he knows, the more he can imagine. But that is only the negative side: positively, it is enough to say, "I fast twice in the week; I tithe all that I acquire"—all my profit. In either case he went quite beyond the law.

There is not a hint that he was insincere in this self-admiration. He was indeed but too thoroughly a believer in himself; and his conduct may have been all that he here claims for it. Outwardly correct, morally; ceremonially, going beyond what was legally required: that was what he honestly thought to be enough for God; and indeed enough to give him that unique place quite beyond others, which, as we see, he claimed. The law, in which he trusted would have told him differently; but when did a law-keeper for righteousness ever take his measure from the law? Nay, *that* was meant for the destruction of legality, and the "Oh wretched man that I am!" which men learn to cry under it, is at least far different from jubilant Pharisaism.

The man's picture is complete, and no comment upon it is needed further. No one believes in him except himself, just as he himself believes fully in no one else. Moses has given sentence against them all that "there is none righteous, no, not one," and "we know that whatever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law: that *every* mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God."

Now we turn to look at the other man. The Pharisee lifts up his head, because he sees nothing. The tax-gatherer is in a Presence that he dares not approach, nor lift up his eyes to. Smiting upon his breast, as if his heart were

twice in the week; I [t]tithe all that I acquire. But the tax-gatherer, standing [u]afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but [v]smote upon his breast, saying, God be [w]propitiated toward me, the [z]sinner. I say unto you, This man [y]went down to his house [z]justified, rather than the other. For [a]every one who exalteth himself shall be abased, but he that abaseth himself shall be exalted.

2 (xviii. 15-17): The lowliness required.

2. And they [b]brought unto him also the babes, that he might touch them; but when the disciples saw it, they [c]rebuked them. But Jesus called them to him, saying,

t cf. Lev. 27. 30. *cf.* ch. 11. 42. *cf.* 1 Cor. 13. 3. *ctr.* 2 Cor. 8. 5.

u cf. ch. 15. 13. *cf.* Is. 6. 5.

v cf. Ps. 51. 1-5. *cf.* Rev. 1. 14.

w cf. Ps. 25. 11. *cf.* Rom. 3. 25; *cf.* Heb. 9. 14.

x ch. 7. 38; ch. 15. 21; *cf.* 1 Tim. 1. 13.

y cf. 2 Sam. 12. 13; *cf.* Job 33. 27, 28; *cf.* Acts 16. 30-34.

z cf. Rom. 4. 4, 5; *cf.* Acts 13. 38, 39.

a ch. 14. 11; *cf.* 1 Sam. 2. 5-8.

b Matt. 19. 13-15; Mk. 10. 13-16.

c Matt. 15. 23; *cf.* ver. 39; *cf.* 2 Ki. 4. 27; *cf.* ch. 9. 49, 50, 54.

viler than his life, he lays hold upon the horns of the altar with the cry, "God be propitiated towards me, the sinner."

That is certainly the full force of his words, and the prevalent objection to its being "pressed" is quite unaccountable. The common version gives "God be merciful" only; the revised puts "be propitiated" in the margin as an alternative, but keeps the other in the text. The "Variorum" Bible, with its clippings from every source, has not even a word with regard to it. Yet propitiation by sacrifice was, as must be acknowledged, one of the leading features of the temple ritual, that temple in which the speaker stood. Moreover it is the Lord, the One who could say of just this sacrificial system, "In the volume of the book it is written of Me" (Ps. xl. 7), who gives us this parable. And the direct purpose of it is to show what is true righteousness before God in contrast with the righteousness in oneself in which men have ever trusted. Yet, says Van Oosterzee, "It is entirely unnecessary to press the word *hilaskesthai* in such a way as to see intimated in it the dogmatic conception of atonement"!

On the contrary, here is the very way of mercy which a sinner needs appealed to by one who realizes himself to be in as unique a way "the" sinner, as the Pharisee is in his own thoughts uniquely righteous. For such an one no vague idea of God's mercy could satisfy the soul; least of all could the Lord allow it to be supposed that it could; and that where Jewish altars were proclaiming day by day, that "without shedding of blood is NO remission." How simple, how natural, to one taught of God, and in the representation of a divine Teacher, that a convicted soul should say, "Let that blood avail for *me!*"

"I tell you," says the Lord, "that this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other." Here again, a wrong use is made, surely, of the comparison between the two. It does not mean that the publican was justified *more* than the other, nor would such comparative justification be of much comfort to one in his condition. That which avails before God is the whole question; and as the Pharisee had decided as to himself, that he, rather than the tax-gatherer, would be found righteous before God, so the Lord decides that it will be the reverse of this, the tax-gatherer rather than the Pharisee. In each case this means, the one, *and not* the other. And it is to the one who in the most distinct way disclaims all righteousness, that righteousness is ascribed, or imputed; but not, surely, merely because he owns himself a sinner, but because there is provided for sinners that propitiation for sin to the value of which before God, even though feebly, his faith appeals.

Thus we see again, as we have seen elsewhere, how near to Paul's is the doctrine of Luke, although it brings us only to the threshold of it. Beyond this, still, there are things which cannot be opened to us until the Spirit of God is come from a glorified Christ in heaven, to reveal what neither eye has seen nor ear has heard.

2. The last verse in the previous part opens the way to the present one. The

[d] Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, [e] Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein.

3 (xviii. 18-27): The hindrance of men's possessions.

3. And a certain [f] ruler asked him, saying, Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? But Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? [g] None is good but one, [that is] God. Thou knowest the [h] commandments, Do not commit adultery; do not kill; do not steal; do not bear false witness; honor thy father and thy mother. And he said, [i] All these things have I kept from my youth. Now when Jesus heard it, he said unto him: Yet [j] one thing thou lackest: sell all that thou hast, and distribute to the poor, and thou shalt have [k] treasure in heaven; and come, [l] follow me. But when he heard these things, he was plunged in [m] sorrow, for he was very rich. And when Jesus saw * that he was plunged in sorrow, he said, How [n] hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! for it is [o] easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they that heard it said, And who can be saved? But he said, The things that are [p] impossible to men are possible to God.

4 (xviii. 28-30): The mercy of God as to what is yielded up.

4. And Peter said, Lo, [q] we have left all,† and followed

*Or "And Jesus looking on him said." Many omit the clause "that he was very sorrowful."

†Some read "our own."

d cf. 2 Chro. 20. 13. *cf.* Acts 16. 31. *cf.* 1 Cor. 7. 14.
e Matt. 18. 3, 4. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 2. *cf.* Ps. 131.
f Matt. 19. 16-22. Mk. 10. 17-22.
g cf. Ps. 16. 2 with Phil. 2. 6, 7. *cf.* Heb. 7. 26. *cf.* Jno. 1. 1.
h ch. 10. 25-28. *cf.* Gal. 3. 10-13.
i ctr. Rom. 3. 19, 20. *ctr.* Rom. 7. 7, 14. *cf.* vers. 11, 12.
j cf. 1 Jno. 5. 12. *cf.* 1 Cor. 13. 3 with 1 Jno. 4. 19.
k cf. ch. 12. 33, 34. *cf.* Phil. 3. 7.
l ch. 9. 23, 24, 57-62. *cf.* Jno. 21. 19, 22. *cf.* 1 Cor. 11. 1. *cf.* Phil. 2. 5.
m ctr. Heb. 10. 34. *ctr.* Acts 5. 41; *cf.* ch. 17. 32.
n Matt. 19. 23-26; Mk. 10. 23-27; *cf.* ch. 6. 24; *cf.* ch. 12. 21.
o cf. Rom. 9. 32; *ctr.* ch. 17. 6.
p cf. Gen. 18. 14; *cf.* Eph. 2. 4-6.
q Matt. 19. 27-30; Mk. 10. 28-31; ch. 5. 11; *cf.* Acts 4. 34-37; *cf.* Phil. 3. 8.

self-abased tax-gatherer has been exalted, the self-exalted Pharisee has been abased. And now they bring babes to Him that He may touch them, and the disciples (too much akin to the Pharisees in spirit) rebuke them for doing so. But Jesus declares that of such the Kingdom of God is, and that whoever would enter it must receive it in the spirit of a little child. Where God is known and rules, man must needs shrink into his native nothingness. Look at the earth from the sun, and what has become of its lofty peaks and granite ranges? The truly wise will own this from the heart: the pride of life, equally with the lusts of the flesh and of the eye, is not of the Father, but of the world.

3. The last portion has brought us fairly into the track of the previous Gospels, and to the end of this division we still pursue it. The story of the rich ruler shows us now the hindrance of worldly possessions, with one in other respects exemplary, and with an apparently earnest craving for eternal life. Yet he turns his back upon the Lord,—sorrowfully indeed, but none the less really; and the Lord's comment upon it generalizes so sad a case alarmingly. If it were as hard for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God as for a camel to go through a needle's eye, then who can be saved? ask the disciples. But salvation is of God; and all things are possible with Him. In fact, if a man has realized his need of salvation, God, it may be hoped, has begun that work in his soul which will make the far off country a place of intolerable famine to him, which lands or gold will be unable to satisfy. He can hardly be called "rich" who has that famine-fever upon him.

4. The question of Peter thereupon shows doubtless a modified form of the

thee. And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no one who hath left house, or wife, or brethren, or parents, or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who shall not receive [r] manifold more in this time, and in the age to come [s] eternal life.

5 (xviii 31-34). The way and the end.

5. And he took unto him the twelve and said unto them, Behold [t] we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that have been written through the [u] prophets shall be accomplished to the Son of man. For he shall be [v] delivered up to the nations, and shall be mocked, and treated shamefully, and spit upon: and they will scourge [him] and put him to death; and on the [w] third day he shall rise again. And they [x] understood nothing of these things, and this saying was hidden from them, and they knew not what was said.

r *cf.* ch. 12. 31. *cf.* 1 Tim. 4. 8. *cf.* 1 Tim. 6. 6. *cf.* Eph. 3. 16, etc.
s Rom. 6. 23.
t ch. 9. 44.
u *cf.* ch. 24. 25-27. *cf.* Is. 53.
v Matt. 27. 2. *cf.* Gen. 37. 28.
w 1 Cor. 15. 3, 4. *cf.* Hos. 6. 2.
x Mk. 9. 30-32. *cf.* Matt. 16. 23 with 1 Cor. 2. 14.

rich man's trouble, so far as disciples may be affected by it. They had left all,—little or much as it might be,—to follow Him: what would they have for it? It is evident that what they have given up has still some value for them, then: and what will be their compensation for it is a matter of concern. The Lord's answer seems one of encouragement, which has with it also a certain blending of reproof. They shall have what the rich man might well crave—eternal life; but in the present also—and had they not begun to taste that blessing yet?—'manifold more" than all that they had given up. Such is God's mercy towards those who, whatever they may have deemed themselves to have renounced for Christ, were in fact but bankrupt beggars when His grace laid hold of them!

5. Once more, therefore, He puts before them what was the way that was opening now before Himself. Here indeed was sacrifice—such as yet they prove unable even to comprehend. The end for Him is in resurrection, in which the life of service taken up once more, His joy is accomplished in what for them and us secures all blessing and the glory of God.

Div. 3.

We enter now upon the last division of the book, in which the glorious work is set before us, in that Peace-offering aspect which, as we have seen, gives character to the whole of Luke. For the most part, the history here comes closely together in the three synoptic Gospels, yet with peculiar passages in the present one, such as the story of Zacchæus and of the penitent thief, which any one would recognize as such. In Luke also, as in Mark only besides, the Lord's ascension into heaven closes the book; a fact so much the more significant because with the ascension and what immediately precedes this, the same writer commences the Acts. The Father's house, which we have before seen opened to receive a prodigal, here receives the One whose work has justified this reception. "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation."

Subd. 1.

The subdivisions are similar to those in Mark: the first giving the first coming of the King, with the fatal hindrances to restoration for Israel at that time, when for a moment it might seem to be at hand; going on, however, to His second coming when that restoration is accomplished. The general character of what is here resembles Mark rather than Matthew, as indeed we might expect; those parts also in which Mark cleaves to Matthew being often omitted by Luke. It is the King, however, necessarily, that is presented here in all the three.

1. [1] That which takes place at Jericho is more fully given by Luke than elsewhere. The story of the blind man, however, is almost precisely as in Mark, Luke showing its character in the closing ascription of glory to God, both on

DIVISION 3. (Chaps. xviii. 35–xxiv.)

Restoration, its hindrances and accomplishment; and the peace-offering work by which man is brought nigh.

SUBDIVISION 1. (Chaps. xviii. 35–xxi. 36.)

The King.

1 (xviii. 35-xix. 27): Premonitions

1 (xviii.35-43): the gift of light

1. [1] AND it came to pass, as he [y] drew near to Jericho, a certain [z] blind man sat by the way-side, [a] begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he inquired what this should be. And they told him that Jesus the Nazaræan was passing by. And he cried out saying, Jesus, [b] Son of David, have mercy on me. And those going before [c] rebuked him, that he should hold his peace; but he cried so much the more, Son of David, have mercy upon me. And Jesus stood and commanded him to be brought unto him; and when he was come near, he asked him, saying, [d] What wilt thou that I do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy [e] faith hath healed thee. And immediately he received his sight, and [f] followed him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave [g] praise unto God.

2 (xix.1-10): salvation to a son of Abraham.

[2] And he entered and passed through Jericho. And behold, a man called by name Zacchæus, and he was chief [h] tax-gatherer, and he was [i] rich. And he sought to [j] see Jesus, who he was, and could not for the crowd: for he was little in stature. And running on before, he climbed into a sycamore to see him; for he was going to pass that way. And when he came to the place, Jesus looked up and said to him, Zacchæus, make haste and come down: for to-day I must [k] abide at thy house.

y Matt. 20. 29-34. Mk. 10. 46-52.
z *cf.* Jno.9.1-8, 39. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.
a *cf.* Acts 3. 2. *ctr.*Jas.2.5.
b *cf.* Matt. 15. 22. *cf.*Matt. 21. 9.
c ver. 15. *cf.* ch. 19.39 with ch.11. 52.
d *cf.* 1 Ki. 3. 5. *cf.* Rev. 22. 17. *ctr* .Jno. 5. 40.
e ch. 7. 50. *cf.* Rom. 4. 20.
f *cf.*ch.8.2,3. *ctr.* ch.9.57-59. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15.
g ch. 5. 26. *cf.* Phil. 1. 11.
h Matt. 9. 9, 10. ch.18.10-13.
i *cf.*ch.18.23. *cf.*Matt.27. 57.
j *cf.* Jno. 12. 21. *ctr.*ch.23.8. *cf.*Heb.2.9.
k *cf.*Gen.18. 2-5. *ctr.*Gen.19. *cf.* Rev.23. 20.

the part of the blind man, and the people who witness it. The beginning of God's work in a soul, as it was in nature, is the bringing in of light. Israel was now but the blind, led of the blind; and with the light in their midst, the "God of this world darkened the minds of those that believed not, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

We have seen in the blind men here (for Matthew shows us two of them) a picture of that remnant in the last days who shall have their eyes opened to see and follow Jesus as their King. Crying after Him, the multitude in that day will indeed "rebuke them that they should hold their peace," but they will only cry the louder to Him, who, finding them in the city of the curse, will presently lead them up to the city of blessing, and of His rest for ever.

[2] The story of Zacchæus follows and is still connected with Jericho and the Lord's passing through it. The name means "pure" or "clean," as his words to the Lord show him to be. We are to take them surely, not as the profession of what he meant to do, but as the answer to the murmured charge against him, and which implicated Christ also, that He was gone to lodge with a man that was a sinner. "A sinner!" he would say, "behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken anything from any one by false accusation,"—a thing which might be done without design—"I restore him fourfold." He is speaking of what he does habitually, not of what he has made a new resolve to do.

And he made haste, and came down, and received [t]him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all [m]murmured, saying, He is gone in to lodge with a man that is a sinner. And Zacchæus stood and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I [n]give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any one by false accusation, I [o]restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, To-day is [p]salvation come unto this house: forasmuch as he also is a [q]son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to [r]seek and to save that which was lost.

[s] (xix. 11-27): the Kingdom appearing at His return, and manifestation then.

[s] And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable because he was near to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the [t]kingdom of God was to be manifested forthwith. He said therefore, A [t]certain high-born man went into a far country to [u]receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And calling his own ten servants, he [v]gave to them ten pounds,* and said unto them, Trade, until I come. But his citizens [w]hated him, and sent an embassy after him, saying, We will not that this man reign over us. And it came to pass, when he was [x]returned, having received the kingdom, that he desired those servants to be called to him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know what they had [y]gained by trading. Then came the

l *cf.* ch. 5.29. *cf.* ch. 10.38. *cf.* Jno. 1.11, 12.
m *cf.* ch. 7.34, 39. *cf.* ch. 15.2.
n *cf.* ch. 11. 41. *cf.* ch. 18.9, 12, 22, 23.
o *cf.* ch. 3.14. *cf.* Ex. 22.1-4. *cf.* Lev. 6. 1-6.
p *cf.* ch. 18. 14. *cf.* 2 Cor. 7. 10. *cf.* Acts 11. 14, 15.
q ch. 13. 16. *cf.* Rom. 4. 11. *cf.* Gal. 3.7, 14, 29.
r Matt. 9.12, 13. Matt. 18.11. *cf.* 1 Tim. 1. 13-16.
s *cf.* ch. 17.20. *cf.* Acts 1.6, 7.
t *cf.* Matt. 25. 14-30. *cf.* Mk. 13. 34-37. *cf.* ch. 20. 9, etc. *cf.* Acts 1.9.

* Greek, "*mina*." An Attic *mina* was equal to about $14. A Hebrew *mina* to about $83.

u *cf.* ch. 20. 42, 43; *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 25; *cf.* Rev. 1. 9 with Rev. 11. 15. v *cf.* ch. 16. 1, etc.; *cf.* Rom. 12. 6-8; *cf.* 1 Pet. 4. 10, 11. w *cf.* Gen. 37. 8; *cf.* Jno. 19. 14, 15; *cf.* Acts 17. 5-7; *cf.* Is. 49. 7. x *cf.* Matt. 25. 31, etc.; *cf.* Rev. 22. 12. y *cf.* 1 Tim. 4. 13-16; *cf.* 2 Tim. 1. 6; *cf.* 2 Pet. 1. 5-8.

And yet Zacchæus is no mere Pharisee under his publican's garb. There may well be the Pharisee in him, for it is in our fallen nature; and the Lord's words, gentle and gracious as they are, are well adapted to meet such a condition; even while to one characterized by it He could not have used them. For "a son of Abraham" meant with Him assuredly a child of faith (comp. John viii. 39); and that day had salvation come to that house, with the Object of faith received within it. Thus, not from that "cleanness" of life that he could claim came salvation to him, nor even the assurance of it, but from Him whom he had sought, who had been seeking Him first: "for the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was *lost*." Such, then, was Zacchæus.

[s] The parable that follows is plainly stated to be supplemental to the Lord's words just spoken, and in correction of the thought that the Kingdom of God was going to be manifested immediately. Nay, He was as a man going into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom and to return to take possession of it. Time would be given in this way for His servants to prove their faithfulness to Him; and while salvation was by faith, and for the lost, such faithfulness would be recognized and rewarded when the Kingdom would be set up. His ten servants have (like the ten virgins) the number of responsibility, and are not necessarily servants in heart, as we see directly. His citizens moreover are in open rebellion against him, and send after him a positive refusal of subjection to him.

All this, of which then His disciples needed to be warned, is, of course, for us as plain as possible in application. The emphasis, however, is laid upon the different result in the case of those who are all intrusted with the same amount, to trade with on his behalf. Here the parable of the pounds differs from that

first, saying, Lord, [z]thy pound hath gained ten pounds.
And he said, [a]Well done, good servant: because thou
hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority
over ten [b]cities. And the second came, saying, Lord,
thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said also
unto him, Be thou also over five cities. And another
came, saying, Lord, behold, thy pound, which I have
kept [c]laid up in a napkin: for I feared thee, because
thou art a [d]hard man: thou takest up what thou laidst
not down, and reapest what thou didst not sow. He
saith unto him, [e]Out of thy mouth will I judge thee,
wicked servant: thou knewest that *I* am a hard man,
taking up what I laid not down, and reaping what I
have not sown; and why didst thou not give my money
into the [f]bank, that at my coming I might have col-
lected it with interest? And he said to those that
stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him
that hath ten pounds. (And they said unto him, Lord, he
hath ten pounds.) For I say unto you that to [g]every
one that hath shall be given; but from him that hath
not, even what he hath shall be taken away. But
those mine [h]enemies, who would not that I should
reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

2 (xix. 28-48): The announcement.

1 (xix. 28-40): peace with the King of peace.

2. [1] And when he had said these things, he [i]went on be-
fore, ascending up to Jerusalem. And it came to pass,
when he drew nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the
mount that is called [the mount] of Olives, he [j]sent
two of the disciples, saying, Go your way into the vil-
lage over against [you], in which at your entering ye
shall find a colt tied, whereon no man ever yet sat:

z *cf.* Eph. 4. 8-13. *cf.* 1 Cor. 4. 7.
a *cf.* 1 Pet. 5. 1-4. *cf.* 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.
b *cf.* Matt. 19. 28. *cf.* ch. 22. 28-30.
c *cf.* Prov. 18. 9. *cf.* 1 Cor. 9. 16, 17, 27.
d *cf.* Ex. 20. 18, 19. *cf.* ch. 15. 29. *ctr.* 1 Jno. 5. 3. *cf.* Ex. 1. 14.
e *cf.* 2 Sam. 1. 16. *cf.* Matt. 22. 11-13. *cf.* Rom. 3. 19.
f *cf.* Rom. 2. 7. *cf.* Prov. 30. 24, 25. *ctr.* ch. 12. 16-21.
g Matt. 13. 12. *cf.* Jno. 15. 2. *cf.* 1 Sa. 15. 28. *cf.* Rev. 2. 5.
h ver. 14. *cf.* Matt. 22. 7. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 8, 9.
i Matt. 20. 17. Mk. 10. 32.
j Matt. 21. 1-11; Mk. 11. 1-10.

of the talents in Matthew, which comes after it and is a development of it. "Matthew presents the sovereignty and wisdom of the giver, who varies his gifts according to the aptitude of his servants; in Luke it is more particularly the responsibility of the servants, who each receive the same sum, and the one gains by it, in his master's interest, more than the other. Accordingly it is not said, as in Matthew, 'Enter into the joy of your Lord,' the same thing to all, and the more excellent thing; but to the one it is authority over ten cities that is given; to the other over five: that is to say, a share in the kingdom according to their labor. The servant does not lose that which he has gained, although it was for his master. He enjoys it. Not so with the servant who made no use of his pound; that which had been committed to him is given to the one who had gained ten. That which we gain spiritually here, in spiritual intelligence and the knowledge of God in power, is not lost in the other world. On the contrary we receive more, and the glory of the inheritance is given us in proportion to our work. But all is grace" (*Synopsis*).

It is the apprehension of grace also that enables for work, as we see by the opposite of this in the unfruitful servant, who is indeed to be judged out of his own mouth. His words, however, are but an excuse for slothfulness. "Instead of laboring in the sweat of his brow for the interests of his lord, he had hidden the entrusted money in the now entirely superfluous *soudarion*: literally 'sweat-cloth'" (*Van Oosterzee.*)

Upon the enemies of the King judgment comes to the uttermost.

2. [1] With these forewarnings of the character of His Kingdom, and of how

loose and bring it. And if any one ask you, Why do ye loose it? thus shall ye say to him, Because the [k]Lord hath need of it. And they that were sent went their way, and found as he had said to them. And as they were loosing the colt, its owners said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? And they said, Because the Lord hath need of it. And they brought it to Jesus; and they cast their own garments on the colt, and set Jesus thereon. And as he went, they [l]spread their garments in the way.

And as he drew nigh, [being] already at the descent of the Mount of Olives, all the multitude of the disciples began joyfully to [m]praise God with a loud voice for all the works of power which they had seen: saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord; [n]peace in heaven and glory in the highest. And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Teacher, [o]rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said, I say unto you that, if these hold their peace, the [p]stones will cry out.

[2] (xix. 41–44). the alternative, humiliation from the hand of the enemy.

[2] And as he drew nigh, he saw the city, and [q]wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things that are for thy peace! but now they are [r]hid from thine eyes. For days shall

k cf. Ps. 50. 10–12. *cf.* Ps. 8. 6–8. *cf.* Ex. 34. 20 with ch. 1. 68.
l cf. 2 Ki. 9. 13. *cf.* Zech. 9. 9. *cf.* Jno. 12. 3. *cf.* Jno. 19. 38–40.
m cf. Jno. 12. 12–19. *cf.* Matt. 23. 38, 39.
n cf. ch. 2. 14. *cf.* Rev. 12. 7–12.
o cf. ch. 18. 15. *cf.* Matt. 23. 13. *cf.* Matt. 27. 18.
p cf. Heb. 2. 11–14. *cf.* 2 Chron. 7. 20–22.
q cf. ch. 10. 34, 35. *cf.* Jer. 9. 1. *cf.* Jno. 11. 35.
r cf. Is. 6. 9–13. *cf.* Rom. 11. 7, 25. *cf.* 2 Cor. 3. 13–16.

His claim to it would be treated at this time, Jesus ascends to Jerusalem, by the way of the "house of unripe figs" (Bethphage) and of the "house of humiliation" or "of sorrow" (Bethany). Then, as in the previous Gospels, He fulfils—or presents Himself for the fulfilment of Zechariah's prophecy, riding into the city on an ass's colt. But it is noticeable how much higher is the character, beyond the former Gospels, in which He is presented here. As Son of David He is not even spoken of, but as the King that cometh in the name of the Lord—Jehovah; and with "peace in heaven, and glory in the highest."

This is a strain, indeed, beyond the intelligence of the disciples; as all here is manifestly under the control of God, and pointing onward to a future time. The King that comes in Jehovah's Name brings not only peace on earth, but peace in heaven. We have heard the Lord announce already the casting down of Satan out of it (see chap. x. 18), and have seen to what period this refers. It is but, however, the effect of the Cross, as that which has overcome principalities and powers, and led captivity captive. Back of man's sin, the Cross reaches to the incoming of sin at the beginning, glorifying God about it all. We little realize the need of this, where it is no longer a question of the salvation of sinners, but of the purification of heavenly things (Heb. ix. 23), the reconciliation of things in the heavens (Col. i. 20). Scripture speaks plainly of it, however, both in type and open speech of the New Testament. Nor will God deal with sin even in definitive judgment until He has glorified Himself in view of it. "Hallowed be Thy Name; Thy Kingdom come:" such is the divine order. That "hallowed be Thy Name" is in effect "peace in heaven," as "glory in the highest."

The Pharisees dare to appeal to the Lord Himself to deny Himself, and rebuke the disciples. He tells them that, if *they* held their peace, the very stones would cry out. As a result of His rejection this has indeed taken place, and the stones of the plowed up city bear witness for Him to-day.

[2] This was the alternative, which His lament over the city brings fully out: it was the Saviour or the destroyer, Christ or the dreaded and hated Roman.

come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast up a palisade* around thee and shall [s]compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side; and they shall [t]level thee to the ground, and thy children within thee, and shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone: because thou [u]knewest not the time of thy visitation.

3 (xix. 45–48): the temple cleansed.

3 And he entered into the temple, and began to [v]cast out those that sold,† saying unto them, It is [w]written, My house shall be a house of prayer: but ye have made it a [x]robbers' den. And he was teaching daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes [y]sought to destroy him; the chief also of the people: and they could not find what they might do; for all the [z]people hung upon him, listening.

3 (xx. 1–18): The vineyard and the Heir.

1 (1–8): the question of authority.

3. 1 And it came to pass on one of the days, as he was teaching the people in the temple, and evangelizing, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him, with the elders, and spake unto him, saying, Tell us by what [a]authority thou doest these things, or who it is that gave thee this authority? And he answered and said unto them, I also will ask you a question,‡ and tell me: The [b]baptism of John, was it from heaven or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven, he will say, Why did ye not believe him? But if we say, Of men, all the [c]people will stone us: for they are persuaded that John was a prophet. And they answered that they [d]knew not whence [it was.] And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

*Or "mound." †A few add, "and bought." ‡Greek, "word."

s ch. 21. 20–24. cf. Deut. 28. 49–57.
t cf. Is. 29. 1–4. cf. Mi. 3. 12.
u ver. 42. cf. Jno. 12. 35, 36.
v Matt. 21. 12, 13. Mk. 11. 11, 15–17. cf. Jno. 2. 14–17.
w Is. 56. 7. cf. Is. 2. 3.
x Jer. 7. 11. cf. Mal. 3. 8 with Hos. 12. 7.
y Mk. 11. 18. Matt. 21. 45, 46.
z Mk. 12. 37. cf. Jno. 7. 40, 46.
a Matt. 21. 23–27. Mk. 11. 27–33. cf. Ex. 2. 14. cf. Jno. 2. 18.
b cf. Jno. 1. 23. cf. ch. 7. 28–35.
c cf. Matt. 14. 5. ver. 19. ch. 22. 6.
d cf. Jno. 1. 19–28. cf. ch. 7. 33. cf. Is. 6. 9, 10. cf. Jno. 9. 29.

In fact, they had already made their choice, and could only be left to it. But the Judge weeps as He gives sentence. If Jerusalem had known, though but at the last moment, the things belonging to her peace! but now they were hidden from her. She and her children within her would be destroyed—not a stone left upon a stone—because she knew not the time of her visitation.

3 But this that He foresaw does not hinder the completion of His testimony among them. He purges the temple: for Him, until He leaves it desolate, His Father's house, and the place of Jehovah's throne on earth, though now long vacant. It was the symbol of His life-long thought, the zeal which was to be as the flame of sacrifice consuming Himself, as the psalmist had long since expressed it (Ps. lxix. 9). Luke mentions, however, the casting out of the traffickers very briefly, dwelling more upon His teaching in the house that He had purged, and how the people hung upon His words. What seed was sown, to spring up at an after-time, we cannot tell; but we know that He was emphatically the Sower, and that upon all seed sown the sign of the cross must pass, that it may be fruitful (John xii. 24).

3. 1 The conflict with the leaders is now upon Him. They begin it with the challenge of His authority, which He answers by one on His side to settle that of John: as to which, to their confusion, but even then insincerely, they have to own incompetence. He refuses then to show them His: for of what use would it be with those who had just acknowledged themselves to be no proper judges? and when the things about which they asked Him bore the authority for doing them upon their face?

2 (9-19): the rejection of the messengers.

2 And he began to speak unto the people this parable: A man [e]planted a vineyard, and let it out to [f]husbandmen, and left the country for a [g]long time. And at the [h]season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard; but the husbandmen [i]beat him and sent him away empty. And he sent again another servant; and they beat him also, and treated him shamefully and sent him away empty. And he sent yet a third; and him also they wounded, and cast him out. And the lord of the vineyard said, What shall I do? I will send my [j]beloved son; it may be they will have regard to him. But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned with one another, saying, [k]This is the heir: let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours. And they cast him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him. What therefore will the lord of the vineyard do unto them? He will come and [l]destroy these husbandmen, and give the vineyard unto [m]others. And when they heard it, they said, May it not be. But he looking upon them said, What is this, then, that is written? The [n]stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner. Every one who falleth on that stone shall be [o]broken; but on whomsoever it shall [p]fall, it will grind him to powder.* And the chief priests and the scribes [q]sought to lay hands on him in that very hour: and they feared the people; for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

4 (xx. 20-xxi. 4): Testing and tested.

1 (20-26): The claims of Cæsar and of God.

4. [1] And they [r]watched him, and sent out men suborned, feigning themselves to be just men, that they might take hold of some word of his, so that they might deliver him up to the power and authority of the governor. And they asked him, saying, Teacher, we [t]know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, and acceptest not the person, but teachest truly the way of God. Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto [t]Cæsar, or not? But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?† Show me a penny:‡ whose

*Or, "Scatter as chaff." †Some omit this clause.
‡Denarius, as in Matt. xviii. 28.

cf. 2 Sam. 14. 2, etc. *s cf.* Jno. 3. 2; Matt. 22. 15-22; Mk. 12. 13-17; *cf.* Ps. 12. 2. *t cf.* Ezr. 4. 13, 19-22; *cf.* Ezr. 9. 7; *cf.* Neh. 9. 37 with Deut. 28. 33,51.

e Matt. 21. 33-46. Mk. 12. 1-12. *cf.* Is.5.1-7.
f cf. Deut.1. 15-17. *cf.*Matt.23. 2.
*g cf.*ch.19.12. *cf.* Acts 13. 19-22.
h cf. Jer.25. 3-7. *cf.* Jer. 35. 15.
*i cf.*Matt.23. 29-36. *cf.* Acts 7. 51, 52. *cf.* Neh. 9. 26.
j cf. Gen.37. 13, 14. *cf.* Gal. 4.4. *cf.*Heb.1.2.
k cf. Ps.2.1-3. *cf.* Matt. 2. 1-18. *cf.* Jno. 11. 47-50. *cf.* Gen. 37. 18-20.
*l cf.*ch.19.27. *cf.* Ps.2.8,9. *cf* Acts 13. 40, 41. *cf.*1 Thess. 2. 15, 16.
m cf. Acts 13. 46. *cf.* Neh. 9. 36, 37. *cf.* Is. 6. 13.
n Ps. 118.22. Acts 4. 11. 1 Pet.2.4,7, 8.
*o cf.*Is. 8.14, 15. *cf.*Is. 28.16. *cf.* Rom. 9. 32, 33.
*p cf.*2Thess. 1. 6-10. *cf.* Dan. 2. 34, 35. *cf.*ch.17.37.
q ch. 19. 47. 48.
*r cf.*Is.29.20, 21. *cf.* Jer. 20. 10.

[2] The parable of the two sons is here omitted, as in Mark; and Luke goes on to that of the Vineyard and its Heir, and the rejection of the messengers crowned by the murder of the last, the only son of the owner. He searches out their hearts, foretells their triumph and the ruin it would bring upon themselves, shows them from their own scriptures, that the Stone to be made by God the Head of the corner was first of all to be rejected by the builders themselves. Here they could not help recognizing that He spoke of them, while their blind passion urged them on to the fulfilment of His words.

4. [1] They go on testing Him, as in the previous Gospels. First, by the question of tribute to Cæsar, in which His answer goes to the root of the matter, and shows the way of deliverance also, if only they would take it. They had bor-

"image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Cæsar's. And he said unto them, Then [v]render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's. And they were not able to lay hold of the saying before the people; and [w]wondering at his answer, they held their peace.

2 (27–40): Relationships hereafter and the Scripture testimony as to death.

2 And certain of the Sadducees, who say that there is no [x]resurrection, came unto him and asked him, saying, Teacher, Moses [y]wrote unto us that, if a man's brother die, having a wife, and he be childless, his brother should take the wife and raise up seed unto his brother. There [z]were, then, seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died childless. And the second [took her, and he died childless];* and the third took her; and in like manner also the seven left no children and died; and last of all, the woman died. In the resurrection, therefore, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife. And Jesus said unto them, The sons of [a]this age marry and are given in marriage; but they that are accounted worthy to have part in that age, and the resurrection [b]from among the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage; for neither can they [c]die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are [d]sons of God, being sons of the resurrection. But that the dead rise, even Moses showed at the bush, when he [e]calleth [the] Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Now he is not God of [f]dead men, but of living ones: for to him all live. And certain of the scribes answered and said, Teacher, [g]thou hast spoken well. For they [h]dared not any more to ask him anything.

u *cf.* Ezr. 1. 1, etc. *cf.* ch. 2. 1. *cf.* ch. 3. 1. *cf.* Jno. 19. 12.
v *cf.* Rom. 13. 1, 6, 7. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14, 17. *cf.* Acts 4. 19, 20. *cf.* Acts 5. 29.
w ch. 13. 17. *cf.* ch. 21. 15.
x Matt. 22. 23–33. Mk. 12. 18–27. *cf.* Acts 4. 1, 2. *cf.* Acts 5. 17.
y Deut. 25. 5. *cf.* Gen. 38. 8, etc. *cf.* Ruth 4. 5.
z *ctr.* ch. 18. 1–8. *cf.* Tim. 1. 4.
a *cf.* ch. 17. 27. *cf.* 1 Cor. 7. 29. *cf.* Rev. 19. 7.
b *cf.* Phil. 3. 11. *cf.* 1 Thess. 4. 16. *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 42–44.
c *cf.* Rom. 6. 9. *cf.* Rev. 20. 6. *cf.* Rom. 6. 5.
d *cf.* Rom. 8. 17–23. *cf.* 1 Jno. 3. 2.

* Many omit the words in brackets.

e Ex. 3. 6; *cf.* Gen. 17. 7; *cf.* ch. 16. 22. f *cf.* Eph. 2. 1, 12; *cf.* Heb. 11. 13–16. g *cf.* Acts 23. 9. h ver. 26; *cf.* Prov. 26. 4, 5.

rowed Cæsar's money; let them pay it him back: a just debt could not be met by rebellion and repudiation. On the other hand, there was a way out: let them render to God His due, and He would come in for them. Thus the whole question is settled in a few simple words, and so that they cannot even say a word against it.

2 The Sadducees take the place of the beaten Pharisees, and raise their question of relationship in the resurrection state, illustrating their difficulty by the case of a woman who had married seven brethren. The Lord answers, that marriage belongs to this world or age, while in the age to come and the resurrection from the dead those counted worthy to obtain these will be as the angels in this respect. The Lord's words announce a resurrection from among the dead comprising the sons of God alone: they are necessarily sons of God if they are sons of the resurrection; the one involves the other. The obtaining the "age to come" (the millennium) goes with this; which is exactly what is said in Rev. xx. 5, that the rest of the dead—the wicked—do not rise again till the thousand years are finished. Among the ranks of these blessed ones there is no death either: and so no need of marriage to fill up the gaps caused by death. He adds that even the dead are yet alive to God; and so destroys the materialis-

3 (41-44): the glory of Christ manifested.

4 (45-47): the ways of the scribes.

5 (xxi.1-4): results with God.

3 And [h]he said unto them, How say they that the Christ is David's son? and David himself [i]saith in the book of Psalms, [The] Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet. David therefore calleth him Lord, and [k]how is he his son?

4 Then in the hearing of all the people, he said unto his disciples, [l]Beware of the scribes, who like to walk in long robes, and who love salutations in the market-places, and [m]chief seats in the synagogues, and chief places at feasts; who [n]devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive [o]more abounding judgment.

5 And he looked up and saw the [p]rich casting their gifts into the treasury, and he saw also a certain poor [q]widow casting therein two mites. And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than all. For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the gifts [of God],* but she out of her want hath cast in [r]all the living that she had.

h Matt 22.42-46. Mk. 12. 35 37. *cf.* ver. 3.
i Ps. 110. 1. Acts 2. 34. 1 Cor.15.25. Heb. 1. 13.
k *cf.* Acts 13. 22, 23. *cf.* Rom. 1. 3, 4. *cf.* Rom. 9. 5. *cf.* Rev. 22. 16.
l Matt. 23.1, etc. ch. 12. 1.
m ch. 14. 7. ch. 11. 43.
n Matt. 23. 14. *cf.* Jer.7. 6-10. *cf.* Am.8.4-6.
o ch. 10. 12-14. *cf.* ch. 12.47, 48.
p Mk.12.41-44. *cf.* ch. 6. 24.

* Some omit.

cf. ch. 12. 16-21; *cf.* ch. 16. 19-31; *cf.* ch. 18. 23-27; *cf.* ch. 19. 2-10. *q cf.* ch. 18. 3; *cf.* 2 Cor. 6. 10; *cf.* Is. 54. 6. *r etr.* ch. 18. 12; *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15; *cf.* 2 Cor. 8. 1-5.

tic idea of death held by the Sadducees, the basis of their denial of resurrection. And finally, He proves this last out of the Scriptures they acknowledged—the books of Moses. They acknowledged, but did not *know* them.

3 They are silenced,—Pharisees, Herodians, Sadducees, all the leaders of the unhappy people,—and He turns upon them with a question which reaches the bottom of the whole controversy, the question of His Person, of the true glory of Christ. Was *He* merely David's Son? Why then did David, speaking by the Spirit, call Him "Lord," saying, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet"? How could He be his Son and yet his Lord? Clearly no answer could be made which did not admit His higher nature.

4 Then He denounces the scribes as those whose ways made known too certainly what they were. Self-importance, rapacity, hypocrisy, marked them. More abundant judgment would be their lot at last. Let us observe that He first meets and refutes their doctrines before He brings their ways into question. Scripture alone could settle as to the truth; and His appeal is there to the Word and nothing else. Truth might have evil professors of it, without annulling its right as truth; but now it was in place to show how sadly their errors were mated with their characters. The common conscience of men was sufficient to condemn them.

5 But He does not close with this, for judgment is work in which He has no delight. If He be wearied with the evil, He refreshes Himself with the good, and among the rich who are casting much into the treasure, His eye discerns a single poor widow who casts in a contribution hardly to be reckoned amid their costly gifts. But He reckons differently from men at large, and not so much by what is put in as by what is kept back. *She* has kept *nothing* back. For Him this poor widow has cast in more than all. For these have given out of their abundance, leaving much still behind; but *she* has cast in all the living that she had.

Such sights, then, were still to be seen in Israel. Alas, they were few, as the very terms of the commendation show. For all the gifts of the rich were not equal to these "two mites, which make a farthing."

5 (xxi. 5-36): Judgment.
1 (5-24): the first, and impending judgment.

5. [1] And as some spake of the *temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and offerings, he said, As for these things that ye behold, the days shall come in which there shall not be left here a *stone upon a stone which shall not be thrown down. And they asked him, saying, Teacher, *when therefore shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when these things are about to come to pass? And he said, See that ye be not *deceived. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am [he], and the time is drawn nigh; go ye not* after them. And when ye shall hear of *wars and tumults be not terrified: for these things must needs come to pass first, but the end is not immediately. Then said he to them, *Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there shall be both great *earthquakes in divers places, and famines and pestilences; and there shall be *fearful sights and great signs from heaven. But before all

* Some add "therefore."

Mk. 13. 7, 8. *x cf.* Hag. 2.21, 22; *cf.* Zech. 14. 2, 3; *cf.* Rev. 6. 4. *y cf.* Rev. 6. 5, 6, 12. *z* vers. 25–27; *cf.* Matt. 24. 29.

s Matt. 24.1, etc. Mk. 13. 1, etc. *cf.* Jno. 2. 19–21.
t ch. 19. 44. *cf.* 2 Chro. 7. 20–22. *cf.* Is. 64.10, 11. *cf.* Ezek. 7. 20–22.
u Matt. 24.3. Mk. 13. 3,4. *cf.* Acts 1.6, 7. *ctr.* 1 Thess. 1. 10 with Phil. 3. 20, 21.
v cf. 2 Cor. 11. 13–15. *cf.* 2 Thess. 2. 3. *cf.* 2 Tim. 3. 13.
w cf. 2 Chro. 15. 5, 6. Matt. 24. 6, 7.

5. The Lord's prophecy from the Mount of Olives has a conspicuous place in each of the three synoptic Gospels: in John only it is not found. Luke's version of it, however, though approaching that of Mark most nearly, differs in a very striking way from both; and all the more because of its resemblances to them.

Matthew gives the fullest account, showing the coming of the Lord in its relation to the Jews, the Church, and the Gentiles. Mark is briefer, and omits altogether the last two; but like Matthew he speaks of the abomination of desolation and the tribulation unequalled in any other time. This last, through the mercy of God very limited in duration, has the abomination as the date of its commencement, and continues till immediately before the appearing of the Lord,—linking in this way the two together, and showing that we are in the time of the end throughout this part. What precedes it is general in character, and might (and doubtless does) take in from the beginning of Christianity, but as a dispensation says nothing of this. It is passed over, quite as in Old Testament prophecy; though in Matthew taken up in its relation to the coming of the Lord in the parables which follow. Luke also says nothing indeed of Christianity as such, and is briefer as to the Lord's coming and what connects with this. We have nothing of the abomination nor of the tribulation following, but in place of this Jerusalem encompassed with armies and her being trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles—of the empires pictured by Daniel—are fulfilled. Then follow the signs of the Lord at hand.

Luke retains his character in this as the Gentile Gospel; and the smaller details are in harmony with this. Thus there is no angelic mission to gather together the elect; and to the parable of the fig-tree he adds "and *all* the trees." The indefinite lapse of time fulfilled in Jerusalem's desolation, as contrasted with the immediate coming of the Lord after the tribulation which follows the setting up of the abomination, distinguishes in the clearest way the destruction by Titus spoken of in Luke from the signs of the end-time in the other Gospels. Jerusalem at the end is not destroyed but delivered, though at her extremity, by the appearing of the Lord.

[1] The commencement of the prophecy is very similar in the three Gospels. In Luke, as in Mark, the disciples' questions have to do entirely with the destruction of the temple, of which He had just been speaking, and only in Matthew have we the additional ones, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of

these things shall they [a]lay their hands upon you and persecute you; delivering [you] up to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake: but it shall turn out to you for a [b]testimony. Settle it then, in your hearts not to [c]premeditate how to answer: for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your [d]adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist. But ye shall be delivered up even by [e]parents and brethren and kindred and friends; and they shall put some of you to [f]death, and ye shall be [g]hated of all men for my name's sake. And a [h]hair of your head shall in no wise perish. By your [i]patience gain your lives.*

But when ye see Jerusalem [j]encompassed with armies, then know that her desolation is drawn nigh. Then let those that are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those that are in the midst of it [k]depart out; and let not those that are in the country enter into it. For these are days of [l]vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Woe unto those that are

a Matt. 10. 16-22. John 16. 2. *cf.* 1 Pet. 4. 12-14.
b *cf.* Phil. 1. 12, 13, 28. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 4, 5.
c ch. 12. 11, 12. Mk. 13. 11. *cf.* Ex. 4. 11, 12.
d *cf.* ch. 20. 40. *cf.* Acts 5. 29-41. *cf.* Acts 6. 10.
e *cf.* Jer. 9. 4. Mi. 7. 5, 6. Matt. 10. 21, 35. *cf.* Jno. 9. 19-23.
f *cf.* Acts 7. 54-60. *cf.* Acts 12. 1, 2. *cf.* Rev. 2. 13. *cf.* Rev. 11. 7.

*Or, "In your patience possess your souls."

g Matt. 10. 22; *cf.* Jno. 7. 7; *cf.* ch. 6. 22. h *cf.* Matt. 10. 29-33; *cf.* 1 Sa. 14. 45; *cf.* Dan. 3. 27. i *cf.* Heb. 10. 36; *cf.* 2 Thess. 3. 5; *cf.* Matt. 24. 13. j *cf.* ch. 19. 43, 44; *cf.* Dan. 9. 26, 27; *cf.* Matt. 24. 15-22; *cf.* Mk. 13. 14-20. k *cf.* Gen. 19. 17-26; *cf.* Ex. 9. 20, 21; *cf.* Jer. 6. 1; *cf.* Rev. 18. 4. l *cf.* Hos. 9. 7; *cf.* Lev. 26. 14, etc.; *cf.* Ps. 69. 22-28; *cf.* Is. 65. 12-15.

the end of the age?" Matthew accordingly it is who develops most fully, as we have seen, the circumstances connected with the end-time and the Lord's return, while Luke gives the full answer to the question as to the temple. In relation to this, he brings out also as the others do, the false Christs that should arise, the wars and rumors of wars, the convulsions and disasters. But before all these things the hatred of men to Him would break out in the bitter persecution of His followers. The nearest ties would be no restraint; the dearest affections of nature would be turned to enmity. They would be delivered up to the synagogues and brought before rulers and kings; Christ, however, being borne witness to in this way, and the Spirit, therefore, with them to furnish them with the needful ability to glorify Him. Through all not a hair of their heads would really perish: He who has counted them all would certainly give a good account of them. By endurance they would gain their lives, instead of losing them: by the very loss of them they would keep them, as the Lord assured them before, to life eternal.

Upon the guilty city, stained with the blood of the prophets, and now to be with that of their glorious King also, days of vengeance were coming. When they saw Jerusalem encompassed with armies, then they might know that its desolation was near: a very different thing, nevertheless, from the "abomination of desolation" of which Matthew and Mark speak, and which is connected with the middle of the last week of Daniel, while *this* comes between the sixty-ninth and seventieth in the same chapter: "and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary" (Dan. ix. 26). There is really no excuse for confounding things so different, and where the interval between them is so plainly expressed.

There are, no doubt, similar warnings to depart from the city, and lamentations over the childbearing women in each case—as easy to be understood in one connection as in the other. But the omissions in Luke are noticeable. Where the armies encompassing the city are the sign, there is naturally no exhortation as to speediness of departure, no need to pray that it might not be upon the sabbath day. In fact, for those *in* Jerusalem, such haste would be

with child, and to those that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress upon the land and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and be led [m]captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem shall be [n]trodden down by the nations until the [o]times of the nations be fulfilled.

2 (25-36): the judgment which is redemption.

[2] And there shall be [p]signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon earth distress of nations in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and billows; men [q]ready to die for fear and expectation of things coming on the habitable earth: for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And [r]then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these things begin to come to pass, [s]look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh.

And he spake a parable to them, Behold the [t]fig-tree, and all the trees: when they already shoot, ye know of yourselves when ye see it, that summer is already nigh. So ye, when ye see these things taking place, know that the [u]kingdom of God is nigh. Verily I say unto you that [v]this generation shall in no wise pass away until all things come to pass. [w]Heaven and

m cf. Deut. 28. 64-68. *cf.* Acts 7.43. *n cf.* Is. 5. 5. *cf.* Is. 63.18. *o cf.* Dan. 9. 24-27. *cf.* Rom.11. 25, 26. *p cf.* Is.13.9, 10, 13. *cf.* Ezek.32. 7, 8. *cf.* Joel 2. 10, 30, 31. *q cf.* Rev. 6. 12-17. ch. 23. 30. *r* Matt. 24. 29-31. Mk. 13. 24-27. Rev. 1. 7. 2 Thess. 1. 7-10. *s cf.* Is. 64.1-5. *cf.* Ps.96.11-13. *cf.* Ps. 97. *t* Matt. 24.32-35. Mk. 13. 28-31. *cf.* Mk. 11. 13.

cf. Matt. 16. 1-3. *u cf.* Heb. 10. 37; *cf.* Jas. 5. 8, 9. *v cf.* ch. 11. 50, 51; *cf.* Matt. 10. 23. *w cf.* Is. 40. 8; *cf.* Is. 51. 6.

rather dangerous than wise, and abundance of time was given, after Cestius Gallus had retired from the city, for leisurely departure. All, therefore, is in perfect keeping.

How terrible these days of vengeance were is known to all. Josephus gives the number of the slain in the siege as 1,000,000; of those carried away captive as 97,000. The complete fulfilment of our Lord's words is matter of common history. The times of the Gentiles are not yet concluded, after more than eighteen centuries of treading down; although there are many signs that they are near their end: to what then takes place the prophecy passes on.

[2] The signs of the end are more briefly given than in the previous Gospels; signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars, answered by the roaring of the sea with its billows from below; between them the nations in distress and perplexity; men ready to die for alarm at what is coming on the earth. There seems good reason to believe that these signs are physical, while yet there are corresponding ones in the political sphere, as the book of Revelation clearly shows. At such a time God's mercy multiplies His calls to men to give heed to what He is doing; and such mysterious sympathy of nature with human woes gives all the apparent countenance that there may be to the fables of astrology. In such ways man perverts the goodness of God to his destruction.

Amid such signs the Son of man will be seen coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Nothing is said of attendant angels or of the gathering of the dispersed of Israel. But when the disciples should see the beginnings of these things, they were to rejoice and lift up their heads, because their redemption was drawing nigh. These would be, in fact, Jewish disciples, such as they were to whom the Lord was now addressing Himself. Christianity was yet unknown, and the long lapse of time designedly hidden.

The parable of the fig-tree applies, as we have seen in various places, to the Jewish remnant of returned captives in the land. Since dispersed, as Luke has told us they would be, they are now again gathering there; the fig-tree is shooting. But Luke adds "and all the trees": in which we are to see apparently, according to the character of Luke, the revival of the nations making up Daniel's

earth shall pass away, but my words shall in no wise pass away. But take [x]heed to yourselves, lest peradventure your hearts be [y]surfeited with debauch and drunkenness, and [z]cares of life, and that day come upon you unawares: for as a [a]snare shall it come upon all that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. [b]Watch therefore, at every season, praying, that ye may prevail to [c]escape all these things that are about to come to pass, and to [d]stand before the Son of man.

x *cf.* 1 Pet.1. 13. *cf.* 1 Pet.4.7.
y Rom. 13. 13. *cf.* 1 Pet. 4. 3, 4.
z *cf.*ch.14.18 -20. *cf.*ch.17.28.
a *cf.*1Thess. 5. 1-7. *cf.* Rev.3.3, 10.
b *cf.* Matt. 24. 42, etc. *cf.* Mk. 13. 32-37.
c *cf.*ch.17.33 -37. *cf.* Rev.7.3.
d *cf.* Matt. 25. 31-40. *ctr.* Ps. 1.5.

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chaps. xxi. 37–xxiii.)

The Cross and its Salvation.

SECTION 1. (Chaps. xxi. 37–xxii. 62.)

Anticipations.

1 (xxi. 37–xxii. 23): Consenting wills.
1 (xxi. 37–xxii. 6): the compact.

1. [1] AND by day he was in the temple, teaching; and at night he [e]went out and lodged in [the mount] that is called the mount of Olives; and all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple to hear him.

e Jno. 8.1,2. *cf.* ch. 2. 7. *cf.* Heb.13. 11-14.

empires. Notable it is that Greece and Italy, after a time of long depression, have again become kingdoms. If we go outside of these, but still within the range of Daniel's vision, Egypt is also reviving under British care. Certainly the trees seem putting forth their leaves. The summer surely is already nigh; and there is no summer apart from the Kingdom of God. Again we are reminded, as in Matthew, of the rapidity with which it will at last come on. The generation that sees the beginning will see the end. And here the Lord solemnly affirms the immutability of His word: though heaven and earth pass, this shall not.

In view of such a time again there come warnings, lest the world, its pleasures and its cares engross and stupefy the heart, and these things come unawares; for as a snare it will come upon those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. They must watch and pray, that they may prevail to escape, and stand before the Son of man. "This is still the great subject of our Gospel. To be with Him as those that have escaped from the earth, to be among the 144,000 on Mount Zion, will be an accomplishment of this blessing, but the *place* is not named; so that, supposing the faithfulness of those whom He was personally addressing, the hope awakened by His words would be fulfilled in a more excellent manner in His heavenly presence in the day of glory" (*Synopsis*).

SUBD. 2.

We have now, as in the other Gospels, the descent to the cross, but which takes here, as has been already stated, that peace-offering character which is so entirely in unison with all that has been before us in the book. The shadow on the cross itself is in no wise what Matthew and Mark have pictured. It is just indicated, but not felt as there. The glory of its accomplishment shines through it and irradiates it. Correspondingly the descent thither is less protracted, the detail is less minute. In Gethsemane, indeed, the effect of the conflict upon His human frame is given, as not elsewhere: for Luke's is, as we know, the Gospel of His humanity; but the conflict itself is not so fully brought before us. Upon the cross there is suffering, but not distance; and the Saviour and His salvation are completely manifested.

Sec. 1.

Anticipations of the cross naturally fill now the short space of time which yet remains before it. He is a willing sacrifice; not taken unawares, but with the full consciousness of all that is to come upon Him. The disciples on the other hand, in spite of all His forewarnings of what would so profoundly affect

Now the *f* feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the passover; and the chief priests and the scribes *g* sought how they might kill him: for they feared the people. And *h* Satan entered into Judas, who was called Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. And he went away, and spake with the chief priests and captains as to how he might deliver him up to them. And they were glad, and agreed to give him *i* money. And he consented, and sought opportunity to deliver him up to them in the absence of the multitude.

f Matt. 26. 1-5. Mk. 14.1,2. *cf.* Jno. 11. 55.
g ch. 19. 47, 48.
h Matt. 26. 14-16. Mk. 14. 10, 11. Jno.6.70,71. Jno.13.2,27.
i Jno. 12. 6.

2 (xxii. 7-13): the witness of the Old Testament to Christ (?)

2 And the day of unleavened bread came, in which the passover must be sacrificed. And he *j* sent Peter and John, saying, Go and make ready for us the passover, that we may eat. And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we make ready? And he said unto them, Behold, as ye enter into the city, there shall meet you a man bearing a *k* pitcher of water: follow him unto the house into which he goeth. And say unto

j Matt.26.17-19. Mk. 14.12-16.
k *cf.* 1 Sa.10. 3. *cf.* Jno.2.6-10. *cf.* Rev. 3. 20.

their whole future, are still unprepared for it. He is occupied, therefore, here in setting it before them, with its consequences and lessons. We must wait, indeed, for John, to see how perfectly He does this; and how at this time His human heart overflows towards them with divine fulness. Luke, of all the synoptists, is nearest John, but here, on that very account, seems to be limited by him; while he is yet outside the sphere of the previous Gospels.

1. We see first how many consenting wills lead Him onward to the cross. The wicked wills of men, pursuing independently their wretched ends, are yet under the control of that divine will which in holiness and loving-mercy governs all. A suited preface this to that which follows. The first thing we are apt to see is man's will, and that under the government of Satan, as it was here: and these things are just as truly to be owned, with all their consequences in responsibility and judgment, as if they were the whole truth, which they are so far from being. We may consider them by themselves, or as simply *against* the will of God; which in their wickedness they were. Yet the whole mystery of sacrifice in heathendom, coming into light in the Old Testament, and crowned with the glory of prophecy, guides on the course of human history to the Great Sacrifice which was to come. The Son of man goeth as it was determined; yet most freely following out the will of God; and now faith looks back in the memorial instituted by Himself, to this as the centre of the ages: the salvation of man, the manifestation of God.

1 In the temple day by day, teaching as never man taught, the crowds hanging upon His lips, those who looked little below the surface might say with the priests themselves, "The world goes after Him. "But the more they feared, the more they were inflamed against Him, seeking His death.

An awful colleague appears: Satan, in Judas the "trafficker,"* ready to make merchandise of his Lord. And these all take their own way, follow their own will, as if God had none, or knew nothing. Yet Satan knows and trembles (Jas. ii. 19); and goes on as if he knew not: such is the infatuation of sin.

2 The type-shadow of that in which they thus were to have their part was now brooding over them. Other eyes were watching it with what mingled feelings. It was the shadow upon the dial-piece of time which had now reached the decisive moment when it was to pass into the brightness which should illuminate all else. But how pass? Thank God, that is not any more a question.

* See p. 119.

the master of the house, The teacher saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I may eat the passover with my disciples? And he will show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. And they went away, and found as he had spoken to them; and they made ready the passover.

3 (xxii. 14-23): the memorial.

3 And when the *t*hour was come, he sat down,* and the [twelve]† apostles with him. And he said to them, With *m*desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer. For I say unto you, that I *n*will not eat any more at all of it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And having received a *o*cup, when he had given thanks, he said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves. For I say unto you, I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine till the *p*kingdom of God shall come. And taking a *q*loaf, when he had given thanks, he brake, and gave to them, saying, This is my *r*body which is given for you: this do for a *s*remembrance of me. And likewise the cup, after having supped, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my *t*blood, which is poured out for you. Moreover, behold,

t Matt. 26. 20, etc. Mk. 14. 17, etc. *cf.* Jno. 13. 1, etc.
m cf. Heb. 9. 11, 12, 26 with Heb. 10. 1-9. *cf.* 1Cor. 5. 7.
n cf. ver. 30. *cf.* Matt. 8. 11.
o ctr. ver. 20. *cf.* Ps. 116. 12-19.
p cf. Matt. 26. 29. *cf.* Mk. 14. 25. *cf.* Nu. 6. 20 with Ps. 22. 22-26. *cf.* Is. 25. 6-8.
q Matt. 26. 26-28. Mk. 14. 22-24. 1 Cor. 11. 23-26. *cf.* Acts 20. 7.
r cf. 1Cor. 10. 16. *cf.* Heb. 10. 5, 10.
s cf. Ex. 12. 42.
t cf. Eph. 1. 7; *cf.* Heb. 13. 20.

* *Literally* "reclined [at table]." † Many omit.

Follow where the man with the water goes in, and there you will find the place prepared which only He can fill. For the Old Testament leads thus to the New; the pitcher merely of water to where presently flow out the living streams in their fulness. This seems to be the meaning which we cannot doubt there must be in the sign given to the disciples here. Christ was going to the place already prepared for Him.

3 When the hour is come, the Lord takes His place, and the apostles with Him. It is striking how many times more, compared with the other Gospels, the official title of the twelve is used in Luke. We might have expected this rather in Matthew; but there, as in Mark and John, it occurs but once, while Luke has it six times. And we can understand, I think, clearly why this is so, when we consider the evangelic character which Luke has throughout. The heart being filled, the going forth of the "good news" which had filled it necessarily follows. The recurrence of the word here is therefore the very opposite of officialism. It is love which calls to and qualifies for and necessitates the mission,—the overflowing of the heart of God towards men.

Here the Lord shows how His heart goes out. The strong Hebrew iteration most fittingly expresses it: "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." He is closing, as the words following intimate, His earth-sojourn with them, and the old dispensation together. He closes it with honor, magnifying it by His celebration of it, while longing for the better thing beyond, its glorious fulfilment in the Kingdom of God. His suffering was the only way to this fulfilment, and itself the assurance, the fullest that could be given, of His longing after it.

He celebrates the old feast, therefore, before He institutes the new; in which He emphasizes, as none of the other Gospels do, its character as a remembrance. As the passover in its full meaning was anticipative, though a memorial of the deliverance from Egypt, the Supper, on the contrary, has its blessedness in being commemorative only. The work of which it speaks is done—complete for ever: the joy is to realize that it is finished. The work is central, closing the old, bringing in the new economy, the new covenant; displacing the temporal with the eternal.

the [u]hand of him who delivereth me up is with me on the table. For the Son of man goeth indeed, as it was [v]determined; but [w]woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed. And they began to [x]question together among themselves who among them it should be who was about to do this thing.

2 (xxii.24-38): Lessons of the cross.

1 (24-30): greatness and rule.

2. [1] There was also a [y]strife among them, which of them appeared to be greatest. But he said to them, The [z]kings of the nations lord it over them, and they that exercise authority over them are called benefactors. But not so [is it to be] with you: but let the greater among you be as the younger, and the leader as the servant.* For which is greater? he that sitteth at table,† or he that serveth?* is not he that sitteth at table?† but I am among you as he that [a]serveth.* But

u *cf.* Ps. 41. 9. Jno. 13. 21.
v *cf.* Acts 2. 23. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 20.
w *cf.* Jno. 17. 12. *cf.* Acts 1. 18-20, 25.
x *ctr.* vers. 33, 34. Matt. 26. 21-25. Jno. 13. 21-30. *cf.* Ps. 139. 23. 24.
y Mk. 9. 34-37. ch. 9. 46-48.
z Matt. 20. 25-28. Mk. 10. 42-45.
a *cf.* Phil. 2. 7, etc; *cf.* Jno. 13. 13-17; *cf.* 1 Cor. 9. 19.

*Or "minister," "ministereth." †Literally "reclineth."

The language used in Luke here is also characteristic in its evangelic appropriateness. "My blood shed for many" in Matthew and Mark both, is here "shed for *you;*" as the bread also is "My body which is given *for you.*" The appropriation is here not *by* them, but *to* them. He would have them realize all the consolation—all the tenderness of it.

With a pang comes the realization that the hand of the traitor is with Him on the table. The Son of man was, indeed, going in the way determined; but that altered nothing as to the guilt of him who in his wickedness had set himself to accomplish what was the purpose of God. "Woe to that man," He says, "by whom the Son of man is betrayed."

But Luke touches this less than any other of the evangelists, and he only notices in a general way the questioning that arises among the disciples on account of the Lord's words.

2. There follow what, I think, stand here together as lessons of the Cross; in which are plainly the roots of the Lord's teaching. But the Cross is indeed, as has been said, the great central point of light in human history, and therefore the lesson of lessons: God and man alike displayed in it; God and man come together, man opposed, and reconciled. What have we not in the Cross? In a sense, all lessons are lessons of it; but here, it is with the Cross in view that they are given; and none the less that disciples show themselves even yet as knowing nothing of it. How much do we know of it yet? And is it the gilded cross of the church fane? or the bare and bloody cross of the Christ of the Gospels?

[1] The controversy among the disciples as to who was to be accounted the greatest among them is peculiar to Luke as to the form and place in which we find it here. But it is the echo of what we find elsewhere in Matthew and Mark, and the manifestation of a spirit which would naturally show itself upon other occasions. In the history of the Church, how terribly has it shown itself all through: of which Matthew also has given us Luke's forewarning (xxiv. 49). Whether it is given by Luke in the sequence of time or not, it is evident that we are to read it as here given: brought into plain, naked opposition to the spirit of Him who was now descending so manifestly to the lowest depths of His humiliation,—to that which, above all, our necessity and His love united to bring Him into. For them the Kingdom of God was still but as the kingdoms of the nations, and they knew not that the humbling oneself as a little child was the way of greatness in it. The Lord, as He had done before, reminds them of the essential difference between dignity among fallen men, and that where divine love ruled. The title of "benefactor," *Euergetes*, is that by which

ye are they who have continued throughout with me in my temptations; and I appoint a [b]kingdom unto you, even as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

2 (31-34): the ministry of evil.

[2] And the Lord said,* [c]Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath demanded to have you,† that he may [d]sift you as wheat; but I have [e]prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and do thou, when once thou hast returned back, [f]strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I am [g]ready to go with thee both to prison and to

* R. V. omits this clause, but the reading is well supported.
† Plural, "all of you."

b *cf.* Matt. 19. 28. *cf.* Rev. 2. 26.
c Matt. 26. 31-35. Mk. 14. 27-31. Jno. 13. 36-38.
d *cf.* Job 1. 8-12. *cf.* Am. 9. 9. *cf.* 1 Cor. 5. 5.
e *cf.* Jno. 17. 9, 11, 15. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 1, 2.
f *cf* Jno. 21. 15-17. *cf.* 1 Pet. 5. 12. *cf.* 2 Pet. 1. 10-15.
g *ctr.* Phil. 3. 3.

one of the Ptolemies is known in history, and was often bestowed upon the Roman emperor. But this flattery was not to be among His disciples; but the greater as the younger, and the leader as in the servant's place. Who was the greater in men's thoughts, the one who was at table or the one that served there? In Him what did they see? The Greatest was the One who served them all!

But on His part He was not unconscious of their faithful continuance with Him in His temptations at the hands of men and Satan throughout His ministry. They were thus shown to have after all another spirit than what their present contention would imply. Love had wrought in them also, and love would exalt them to a place in His Kingdom at His table, appointed to a kingdom as the Father had appointed Him, and to sit on thrones judging under Him the tribes of Israel. So far as rule is service, love may desire rule; and where need is, the love that serves does rule; while that which seeketh not its own can have a pleasure which it seeks, and as love, joy in love. Thus the table and the throne can be rewards in the Kingdom of God, looked for and sought after, while not departing from the Saviour's rule. The way appointed for the Kingdom is the Cross, the sacrifice of love; and "if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him."

[2] In the next lesson there is shown a ministry which is not of love, and yet love reigns in it: the sifting of God's wheat by a skilful, but not a friendly hand. "Satan has demanded to have you," says the Lord; "that he may sift you as wheat." It is in that character the accuser of the brethren, as with Job of old, would test their pretension; and *he* found that it was no light thing to be in Satan's sieve. For Simon the Lord has to pray that his faith, sore tried as it is, may not fail; it is in danger, it would seem, of fatal lapse. Nay, he has really turned aside; he must be "turned back"; but then with a gain, for he is now able, spite of the weakness he has shown, to strengthen others: "when thou hast turned back, strengthen thy brethren."

Would it not seem as if, after all, Satan had nearly succeeded? too nearly, surely, for Peter to claim a victory. His faith has not altogether failed, but that is due only to the intercession of Another: he has in fact a terrible fall. What *gain* can there be in all this? how can he have learned how to strengthen others,—himself just proved so feeble! and what did Satan's sieve accomplish? or did it accomplish anything? if not, why was it permitted?

All is answered by the fact of what faith is; and of where, being what it is, its strength is found. Faith is dependence upon another; self-distrust, the consciousness of inherent weakness, is therefore necessary to it. We see, then, how it would be possible for defeat to be a victory; how Satan's sieve would then be that strange ministry of evil of which the Cross is the fullest example: for Simon the bringing him out of a strength which was but weakness, into a conscious weakness which would be strength, and in which his lesson learnt would enable him not only to stand himself, but to strengthen his brethren.

death. But he said, I tell thee, Peter, the [h]cock shall not crow to-day till thou shalt have thrice denied that thou knowest me.

3 (35-38): "take what you have:" the manifestation of the world.

[3] And he said unto them, [i]When I sent you forth without purse and wallet and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. And he said unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him [j]take it, and likewise [his] wallet; and he that hath none, let him sell his garment and [k]buy a sword. For I say to you that this that is written must be accomplished in me: And he was [l]reckoned with the lawless; for that which concerneth me hath [its] completion. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is [m]enough.

3 (xxii.39-46): Gethsemane.

3. And he came out, and [n]went, as he was accustomed,

[h] ver. 60.
[i] Matt. 10.9, 10. ch. 9. 3. *cf.* Jno. 17. 11, 12.
[j] *ctr.* vers.49-51. *cf.* 1 Cor. 4. 11, 12. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 16.
[k] *cf.* 2 Cor. 10. 4. 5. *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 19, 32.
[l] Is. 53. 12.
[m] *cf.* Matt. 16. 11, 12. *cf.* Jno. 18. 36.
[n] Matt. 26. 36. Mk. 14. 32. Jno. 18. 1.

Thus all is plain; and in that which follows the Simon who needed this is unveiled to us. Honest, earnest, zealous—all that,—his "Lord, I am ready to go with thee both to prison and to death" displays the Simon whose faith in Christ needed to be strengthened by a fall. The end of this story is not yet reached; but the comforting assurance is read plainly in it that (as Paul proved it at a later day) the "messenger of Satan" may be God's missionary too, to do His needed work in the souls of His own.

Yet, had he taken warning, Peter might have escaped, not without his lesson learnt, but by learning it from the lips of the Lord. That before cock-crowing he would thrice deny Him, might have been so accepted as the revelation of his weakness and danger as to save him from it, by delivering him from the need. Instead of this, he resisted the gracious Voice that would have shielded him from the evil; and the prophecy had to take effect. Even then there remained for him, when strength and pride were smitten down together, the comfort of the exhortation: "thou, when thou hast turned back, strengthen thy brethren."

[3] The Lord goes on to warn His disciples of the altered circumstances in which now they would find themselves. The cross was His definite rejection both by Israel and the world. He was submitting to it, and they must submit, and expect to find the full edge of its opposition. When He had sent them forth before, they had lacked nothing: He had effectually provided for them. Now, although His faithful love could not cease, yet they were to be permitted to feel the condition of things. Accordingly, they were to take with them what they had, and go armed, as in a hostile country: better have no garment than no sword. He uses the figurative language so common with Him, and by which He would exercise their hearts with regard to all His utterances; indeed, ours as well as theirs. Presently Peter is using his sword; appealing evidently to the words here, as so many have appealed since, only to find how sadly he had misinterpreted them. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal," says the apostle afterwards, "but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." The sword does not naturally symbolize mere defensive warfare; and the spiritual sword is the word of God alone. The true disciple will not meet the opposition of the world with a passive resistance merely, but with that which has power over the conscience and heart. If the world is in active opposition to Christ we are to be His soldiers; and that which is the food of mighty men furnishes at the same time for the battle-field. Thus no one can properly assimilate the bread of God, without becoming so far a champion.

The disciples did not understand it. "Lord, behold," they said, "here are two swords." He replied, "It is enough." For the present, it was of no use to press it further. When the Spirit of God should bring to their remembrance all that He had said to them, they would understand it better.

3. He goes out, as He was accustomed to the Mount of Olives, and we have

to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples also followed him. And when he was at the place, he said to them, [o]Pray that ye enter not into temptation. And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and he kneeled down and prayed, saying, Father, [p]if thou wilt, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will but thine be done. And there appeared to him an [q]angel from heaven, strengthening him. And being in [r]conflict, he prayed more earnestly; and his [s]sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.* And when he had risen from his prayer, he came to the disciples, and found them [t]sleeping from sorrow. And he said unto them, Why sleep ye? Rise and pray that ye enter not into temptation.

o ver. 46. 1 Pet. 4. 7. 1 Pet. 5. 8.
p *cf.* Jno. 6. 38. *cf.* Jno. 12. 27, 28.
q Matt.4.11. *cf.* Heb. 1. 14.
r *cf.* Heb. 5. 7, 8.
s *cf.* Heb.12. 1-4.
t *cf.* ch.9.32. *cf.* Heb.12. 5, 12.

*A number of MSS. omit these two verses, but others equally ancient give them. A false idea of our Lord's divinity might have led to their early omission.

now (more briefly than in the other Gospels,) the mystery of Gethsemane. We have already sought to show the character of the suffering there, so far as it is permitted to us to enter into it. The depths who can penetrate? The mysteries of His Person and of His work combine here to make us realize that "no one knoweth the Son but the Father," and the danger of any speculation as to these divine things. Luke, from the character of his Gospel, does not enter so fully into this suffering, for the same reason that the Cross itself does not exhibit the cup in its bitterness, as the previous Gospels do. And we must not mistake for this the physical effects upon Him which Luke alone describes. Even the significant name of the place, Gethsemane, the "oil-press," is not given here; and John makes no mention either of this or of the agony endured there. Each writer is divinely guided in what he gives or withholds, and the only evangelist who was one of the three selected by the Lord to watch with Him in that hour of agony is the only one who omits all notice of it.

Those who dwell most upon the bitterness of the "cup" that was before Him, are they who tell us of the hymn before their starting out. Luke, who dwells upon the effects for others, emphasizes by repetition the Lord's warning, "Lest ye enter into temptation." But he does not speak of the selection of the special three to be with Him; a selection which shows, as in the transfiguration, the sanctuary character of that to which they are admitted. We do not hear the threefold repetition of the prayer, nor see Him prostrate on the ground as He utters it. The appearance of the angel also relieves the darkness. It is not the forsaking of the Cross, although His human frame is oppressed, and needing the ministry that He receives. We dare not say with some, that His soul required it. He was going out to that in which He would be absolutely alone, and where all the blessing of man, all the fulfilment of the divine counsels, would depend upon His ability to endure it all. Who could imagine an angel helping Him on to this?

But the body suffers, and presently the strain upon it is seen in the "sweat, as it were great drops of blood," that fall down upon the ground. Laborer for God and man as He is, His labor is a warfare also: the enemy is here, as He presently says to those who come to apprehend Him: "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." The Seed of the woman is planting His heel upon the head of the old serpent, but His heel is bruised in doing this. In the weakness of perfect Manhood He suffers, and conquers by suffering.

The darkness of the hour is on the disciples also. Coming back to them, He finds them sleeping for sorrow. And again He has to urge on them the peculiar character of that which they are meeting: "Rise and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."

4 (xxii.47–53): The yielding up.

4. While he yet spake, behold, a [u]multitude, and he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near to Jesus, to kiss him. But Jesus said unto him, Judas, [v]betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? And when those about him saw what was going to be, they said, Lord, shall we [w]smite with the sword? And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear and [x]healed him. And Jesus said unto the chief priests and captains of the temple and elders, who were come against him, Have ye come out as against a [y]robber with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched not forth your hands against me; but this is your hour, and the [z]power of darkness.

5 (xxii.54–62): The result in divine government for Peter.

5. And they laid hold upon him, and [a]led him away, and led him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed [b]afar off. And when they had lighted a fire in the midst of the court, and were set down together, Peter sat down [c]amongst them. And a certain [d]maid having seen him sitting in the light [of the fire], and having fixed her eyes upon him, said, This man was also with him. And he [e]denied [him],* saying, Woman, I know him not. And after a little while another saw him and said, Thou also art of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. And about the space of an hour after, another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this [man] also was with him: for he is a [f]Galilean. And

*Many omit.

u Matt. 26. 47-56. Mk. 14. 43-52. John 18. 2-11.
v *cf.* 2 Sam. 3. 27.
w *cf.* 2 Sam. 20. 9, 10. Jno.6.70,71. *ctr.*ch.7.38.
x *cf.*ver.38. *cf.* Matt. 5. 38, 39.
y *cf.* Is.53. 5. *cf.*Ps.109.4. *cf.*ch. 23.34.
z ver. 37. ch. 23. 32. *cf.*Ex.12.6. *cf.* Jno. 14. 30.
a Matt. 26. 57-68. Mk. 14. 53-65. Jno. 18. 13, 19-24.
b *ctr.* Jno. 13. 23. *cf.*Jno.21.19.
c *cf.* Gen.12. 11. *cf.* Jas. 4.4.
d *cf.* Prov. 28. 1. *ctr.* Acts 4. 19, 20.
e ver. 34. Matt. 26.69-75. Mk. 14. 66-72. Jno. 18.15-18, 25-27.
f *cf.* Acts 1. 11. *cf.*Acts 2.7.

4. Immediately a multitude are upon Him, headed by Judas, who, according to a preconcerted signal, draws near to kiss Him. Of all signs that could have been given, it was surely that of the most brazen, smooth-faced hypocrisy. The Lord shows His deep sense of the insult: "Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a *kiss?*"

On the other hand the zeal of a disciple would do Him the wrong of defending Him. A sword is out and a servant of the high priest is smitten. The appeal they make to Him has evident reference to His own words: were they to arm themselves with swords without using them? But we must be in communion with Christ to use His word aright. Was He so weak as to need help at hands like theirs? He does not answer this as in Matthew, by any assertion of how the Father's angels waited upon His will; but according to the manner of Luke puts forth His power in grace, and heals the wound. Yes, power He has; but now to lay down His life and take it again; they knew not yet the Cross as the symbol of fullest, widest, sweetest authority.

He turns to the multitudes, to appeal against their treatment of Him as a robber, when day by day He had been openly with them in the temple, and they had not laid hold of Him. They had waited for their hour and found it; darkness had favored them: alas, in reality that "*power* of darkness" which brooded over and swayed men's minds. They knew not what they were doing, or whither they were going, because that darkness had blinded their eyes.

5. The multitude lead Him to the house of the high priest; but the first thing we are called to see there is the conclusion of that story of Simon Peter which

Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And directly, while he was still speaking, a [g]cock crew. And the Lord turned and [h]looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said to him, Before the cock crow [to-day],* thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out and [i]wept bitterly.

[g] *cf.* Rom. 7. 24, 25. *cf.* Ps. 60. 8 with Jer. 2. 19. [h] *cf.* Ps. 32. 8. [i] *cf.* 2 Cor. 7. 10, 11.

SECTION 2. (Chaps. xxii. 63–xxiii. 25.)

Judgment without judgment.

1 (xxii. 63–71): The truth in faithfulness.

1. AND the men that held Jesus† [j]mocked him, [k]beating him, and having blindfolded him, they asked him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee? And many other things they said, railing, against him. And when it became day, the eldership of the people was gathered together, both chief priests and scribes. And they led

[j] *cf.* Ps. 69. 12. [k] *cf.* Is. 50. 6.

*Some omit. †Most read, "Him."

we have already heard announced to him by the Lord. It is a brief one. He follows His Master into the place of His mock trial, hoping to escape notice amid the crowd that had swarmed in after Him; but thus obliged already to deny Him with his looks, if not his words. The rest soon follows. He is seen in the light of the enemy's fire, at which he is warming himself. Accusation after accusation brings out denial. In the midst of it all, the crow of a cock startles him into remembrance, and he must have turned, spite of his danger, his eyes upon the well-known Figure, silent, patient, amid the rabble of His accusers. At that moment, "the Lord turned and looked upon Peter." How the eyes met! Then the whole horror of his position burst upon him. "He went out and wept bitterly."

Sec. 2.

We are now to see the Son of God before the judgment-seat of man. Luke is briefer here than any of the Gospels. The attempts of the false witnesses before the Jewish tribunal are entirely ignored, as well as the adjuration of the high priest. We have simply the Lord's affirmation for Himself of who He is, which is sufficient for their purpose: any serious inquiry as to the truth they do not mean. Before Pilate we have only the simple fact of His acquittal of the charge preferred; spite of which He is delivered up to the people's will. It is a judgment without judgment—without the poorest semblance of right. The reference to Herod is peculiar to Luke; but he merely scoffs, and is met on the Lord's part by absolute silence. He is not in any place of authority that calls for recognition, as with Pilate and the Jewish high priest, and in his character there is nothing that can in the least measure claim it. He is past even reproof.

On the whole, Luke, following the other synoptists, seems to give simply the result morally of that of which they have given the history. The guilt of pursuing the Lord to death is that of Israel, Pilate guiltily yielding to them, indeed; and Herod being but the sign of how low Israel had fallen, even though, nay, even because himself (born of an Edomite father and a Samaritan mother,) no real Israelite.

1. As is everywhere apparent, the Jewish question was the supreme one of the Person of the Christ,—the fundamental question for every soul. Here also the fundamental witness is His own. As He stands before us,—as we see Him in every circumstance and relation of life,—who is so worthy to be believed as He?

Here, then, we have His testimony, the "Faithful and True"; and it is in faithfulness as in truth that He renders it. A passage peculiar to Luke points out this: for, when they ask, "Art Thou the Christ? tell us," He can say with assurance, "If I tell you, ye will not believe; and if I also ask you, ye will not answer Me, nor let Me go." It was in fact the incriminating question; and

him away to their [l]council, saying, If thou art the Christ, tell us. But he said unto them, If I tell you, ye [m]will not believe; and, if I ask, ye will not answer me, nor let me go.* But from henceforth shall the Son of man [n]sit on the right hand of the power of God. And they all said, Art thou, then, the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say it: for† I [o]am. And they said, What [p]need have we of any further testimony? for we ourselves have heard from his own mouth.

2 (xxiii. 1-4): The witness of the judge.

2. And the whole multitude of them arose and [q]led him to Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this [man] [r]perverting our nation, and forbidding to give [s]tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ, a [t]king. And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews? And he answered him, and said, Thou [u]sayest it. And Pilate said to the chief priests and multitudes, I [v]find no fault in this man.

3 (xxiii. 5-12): The scoffer's "sign."

3. But they insisted, saying, He [w]stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning even from [x]Galilee to this place. Now when Pilate heard that,‡ he inquired whether the man were a Galilean. And when he knew that he was from Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him back to [y]Herod, who himself was in Jerusalem in those days. And when Herod saw Jesus, he

*Some omit this clause, but it is evidently to be retained.
†Or, "Ye say that I am." ‡Some read "heard of Galilee."

l Matt. 27.1. Mk. 15. 1.
m *cf.* ch. 20. 2, 8. *cf.* Jno. 10. 24-26.
n *cf.* Acts 7. 55, 56 with Rev. 1. 7. *cf.* Heb. 1. 3.
o Jno. 10. 30.
p *cf.* Mk. 14. 55-59.
q Matt. 27. 2. Mk. 15. 1. Jno. 18. 28.
r vers. 5, 14. *cf.* Acts 17. 7.
s *ctr.* Matt. 22. 17-21. *cf.* Ps. 109. 2.
t *cf.* Jno. 18. 33-36. *cf.* Jno. 19. 12.
u *cf.* ch. 22. 70. *cf.* 1 Tim. 6. 13.
v vers. 14, 22. *cf.* Acts 3. 13. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 22.
w *ctr.* John 6. 15. *ctr.* ch. 14. 25-27.
x ch. 4. 14.
y ch. 3. 1. ch. 13. 31, 32.

since they asked it for an evil purpose, why should He give them the answer that they sought? But this does not influence Him. What they will make of it is for them to decide; He will not on that account refuse the testimony of such unspeakable importance to them. He is in their hands, for them to work their cruel will upon Him; yet only to bring Him out of His present humiliation, and set Him free for the glory before Him. "Henceforth shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God." They understand the claim and challenge it: "Art Thou the Son of God, then?" they ask. "Ye say it: for I am," He answers. He is condemned, not at the mouth of other witnesses, but His own.

2. He is carried before Pilate, charged with the notoriously false charge of forbidding tribute to Cæsar: this based upon the truth that He is Christ a King. Pilate puts the question to Him, "Art Thou the King of the Jews?" to which John gives the full answer. Luke simply gives His affirmative reply, and the outcome of the examination, in which Pilate clears Him of all that would involve a crime against Cæsar; from which judgment he never recedes. When he sentences Him at last to the death of the cross, it is with the carefully maintained acknowledgment that he is sacrificing an innocent man.

3. The scene with Herod is peculiar to Luke. Pilate sends Him to him, hoping for something from the ruler from whose jurisdiction Jesus has come, which may settle a case made troublesome by the persistence of the people. Herod has got over his fear of Christ, and is glad to have the opportunity of seeing Him, hoping even to see Him do some "sign" in his presence. His conscience more and more hardened by his evil course, he evidently regards the Lord simply as a magician, such as was Simon the sorcerer in Samaria afterwards, and who would be sure to take the opportunity to impress such an audience with proofs of his power.

He finds indeed a sign, such as he had not looked for, a Man silent and un-

was exceedingly glad, for he had been for a long time [z]desirous to see him, because he had heard many things concerning him, and he hoped to see some sign done by him. And he questioned him with many words, but he [a]answered him nothing. And the [b]chief priests and the scribes stood, and vehemently accused him. And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and [c]mocked him, and having put on him a brilliant robe, he sent him back to Pilate. And the same day Herod and Pilate became [d]friends with one another: for they were before at enmity between themselves.

4 (xxiii. 13-25): Yielded to the people's will.

4. And Pilate, having called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, said unto them, Ye have brought unto me this man as one that perverteth the people; and behold, I, having examined him before you, have found [e]no fault in this man touching those things of which ye accuse him. No, nor yet Herod; for he* hath sent him back to us; and behold, nothing worthy of death hath been done by him. I will therefore [f]chastise him and let him go. [Now he was [g]obliged to release one unto them at the feast.]† But they cried out all together, saying, [h]Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas: (a man who for a certain insurrection made in the city, and for murder, had been cast into prison.) And Pilate, being [i]desirous to release Jesus, spake again to them; but they cried against [it,] saying, [j]Crucify him, crucify him. And he said to them

z ch. 9. 9.

a *cf.* Jno. 19. 9. *cf.* Is. 53. 7.

b *ctr.* Heb. 4. 15.

c *cf.* ch. 22. 64. *cf.* ver. 35. ch. 18. 32.

d *cf.* Acts 4. 27. *cf.* Prov. 1. 10-16.

e ver. 4.

f ver. 22. Jno. 19. 1. Matt. 27. 26.

g *ctr.* ch. 13. 1. Matt. 27. 15. Mk. 15. 6. Jno. 18. 39.

h *cf.* Is. 53. 3. *cf.* Jno. 1. 11.

i *cf.* Jno. 19. 8, 12.

j Jno. 19. 15. *cf.* Ps. 69. 20.

*A few ancient MSS., and some excellent editors read, "I sent you to him." The vast weight of authority however gives it as in the text.

†Omitted by most editors, but certainly very old.

moved, answering nothing to his questions, nor to the accusations of the chief priests and scribes, who, fearing the effect upon Herod, vehemently accuse Him. There is not even a word of warning or rebuke, but only that unbroken silence so much more terrible.

The unhappy man answers it but with mockery. Arraying Him in a brilliant robe, perhaps that of a candidate for honors, he sends the Lord back to Pilate, as if to intimate that such claims as these merited no more serious consideration.

With this Pilate and Herod are made friends again: they had before been at enmity. They are often represented as united by their common enmity to Christ; but enmity is too strong a term: He had not in fact been enough to them even to draw out enmity. He was to them, as with so many, a mere circumstance in a day's history, with Pilate an annoying one; with Herod, the possible material for amusement which it had failed to yield. Both men had enough of scepticism in them to make it impossible to give themselves to investigate a difficult problem, as to which the cost was much more certain than the profit. Their friendships were probably much less real than their enmities; but both were in a world where Christ was not, or an uncertain speculation at the most. Would that one could believe it an uncommon case.

4. The matter is again upon Pilate's hands, however, who has just enough conscience and enough guilt of his own, to make him unwilling to burden himself with the guilt of others. These miserable Jews too, whom he despised and hated, but who held him by that formidable reminder of his accountability to Cæsar, who was near and real, whatever might be thought of God. So he weakens and vacillates,—makes it not a question of righteousness as at first,

the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found in him nothing worthy of death: I will chastise him, therefore, and release him. But they were urgent, with loud voices, asking that he might be crucified. And their voices* [k]prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that what they asked for should be done. And he [l]released him who for insurrection and murder had been cast into prison, whom they asked for, but Jesus he delivered up to their [m]will.

k *cf.* Ex. 23. 2.

l Acts 3. 13-15. Matt. 27. 26. Mk. 15. 15. Jno. 19. 16.

m *cf.* Jno. 10. 17, 18. *cf.* ch. 19. 14 with Acts 13. 27.

SECTION 3. (Chap. xxiii. 26-56.)

The Offering up and its Fruits.

1 (26-31): The fore-announcement of doom.

1. AND as they led him away, they laid hold upon a certain [n]Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country,† and upon him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus. And there [o]followed him a great multitude of the people, and of women who bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, [p]weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children: for behold there

n Matt. 27. 32. Mk. 15. 21. *cf.* Jno. 19. 17. *cf.* Phil. 3. 10.

o ch. 8. 1-3.

p *cf.* ch. 19. 41, etc.

*Some add, "with those of the chief priests."
†Or, "from the field."

but of mercy,—puts it thus into the hands of the Jews themselves whose malignity even he cannot understand,—Barabbas or Jesus? Barabbas? then they must tell him what to do with Jesus, this man in whom no evil has been found: crucify him? surely impossible; but he is now helplessly in their hands. With a last vain effort to have the guilt wholly theirs, he delivers up the Man whose innocency he has so openly declared to the death of the slave, of the criminal, and the curse of God (Deut. xxi. 23).

Sec. 3.

In the story of the Cross the peculiar character of Luke is unmistakable. He omits most of the Lord's suffering from the mere wickedness of men. We do not read of the scourging or the crown of thorns. The mockery round the cross is more briefly given. The darkness falling upon the land is noticed, but there is no cry to One who has forsaken Him. On the other hand, the fruits of His work of atonement are seen all through: in the prayer for the forgiveness of His murderers; in the story of the dying robber; as well as in the rending of the veil of the temple. Even His last words, "Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit," have their own significance in this way.

The Gospel of the Manhood is seen also. The centurion's testimony is to the "righteous *Man*." And the lament of the women of Jerusalem is in accordance with this: that human sympathy too simply natural for the Lord, spite of its manifestation of the better side of man's nature, unreservedly to accept.

1. This lamentation of the women is the first thing here, after the account, given in all the synoptists, of the cross being laid upon Simon: the need of cross-bearing by the disciple being a necessary thing to hold up before us all.

To the women He replies with lamentation for lamentation. They have more cause to weep for themselves and their children than for Him, for the day of their sorrow was near at hand in which the blessing would be theirs who had no children. In the midst of a generation the fire of whose wrath could kindle after this sort in the green and fruitful tree, what must be the lot of those who were like the dry wood, fit fuel for the flame? This is not divine wrath of which He is speaking, though divine wrath indeed might give them up to it, but what they would inflict one upon another. The sufferings of those shut up in the caldron of that besieged city are matters of common history. The Lord

come days in which they shall say, [q]Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the breasts which never nourished. Then shall they begin to [r]say to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in the [s]green tree, what shall be done in the [t]dry?

2 (32–43): Condemnation and Salvation.

2. And there were led with him two others also, [u]malefactors, to be put to death. And when they came to the place which is called the [v]Skull,* there they crucified him, and the malefactors one on the right hand, and the other on the left. And Jesus said, Father, [w]forgive them; for they [x]know not what they do. And [y]parting his garments among them, they cast lots. And the people stood, beholding. And the rulers also [z]derided him, saying, He saved others: let him save himself, if this is the Christ, the chosen one of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, saying, If thou art the king of the Jews, save thyself. And there was also a [a]super-

q *cf.* Matt. 24. 19.
r *cf.* Hos. 10. 8. *cf.* Rev. 6. 16, 17.
s *cf.* 1 Pet. 4. 17. *cf.* Ps. 1. 3.
t *cf.* Matt. 21. 19. *cf.* Jude 12.
u Matt. 27. 38. Mk. 15. 27. Jno. 19. 18. *cf.* Is. 53. 12.
v Matt. 27. 33–37. Mk. 15. 22–26. Jno. 19. 17. *cf.* Jno. 5. 12.
w *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 23. *cf.* Acts 7. 60.
x *cf.* Acts 3. 17. *cf.* 1 Cor. 2. 8.
y Ps. 22. 18. Matt. 27. 35. Mk. 15. 24. Jno. 19. 23, 24; *cf.* Gen. 37. 23, 31–33.
z *cf.* Ps. 22. 6–8; *cf.* Ps. 69. 12, 21; Matt. 27. 39–43; Mk. 15. 29–32.
a Matt. 27. 37; Mk. 15. 26; Jno. 19. 19–22.

* In Latin, "Calvary."

would lead them to consider the state before God in which the nation as a whole was, already putting their hand to that which as the consummation of their guilt would ensure the awful doom that was just at hand.

2. The cross is reached, and He is placed upon it, two malefactors with Him, one on either side. And now He pleads for those who have placed Him there the ignorance in which they have done it: a thing which leaves them yet the possibility of shelter in the city of refuge; and which the apostle accordingly takes up afterward with the people in his pleading with them to repent and turn to God (Acts iii. 17), as Paul applies it to himself also: "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly, in unbelief" (1 Tim. i. 13). Thus the Lord has fulfilled His own parable (chap. xiii. 6–9): the barren fig-tree is to be digged about and dunged, in order that it may yet be seen if it will bring forth fruit. This, notwithstanding His sentence pronounced upon it (Matt. xxi. 19), which He will give them still the opportunity to avert, as Nineveh averted theirs. And such is the mercy of God.

Heedless and heartless, they part His garments among them, casting the lot. Luke is briefest of all as to this, of which John will show us another side. The superscription over him in the languages of wisdom-seeking, of empire, of religion, publishes His title to the world.

And now the cry begins to ring out, though in mockery, of *salvation*. "He saved others," say the rulers: "let Him save Himself, if He be the Christ, the chosen of God." Even the soldiers take it up after their own fashion: "If thou be the King of the Jews, save Thyself." And then one of the robbers makes the impossible conjunction: "If Thou be the Christ, save Thyself *and us*." Truly impossible to put these things together.

But the rulers know no more of salvation than the soldiers or the robber. A Christ who would save Himself could *not* be the Christ predicted by the prophets, or the Saviour of others, and Isaiah had pictured exactly what was passing before their eyes. Who could doubt the application of such words as we find here? "Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong: *because He hath poured out His soul unto death; and was numbered with the transgressors, and bare the sin of many*, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. liii. 12).

scription over him, in Greek, and Roman and Hebrew letters, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Now one of the [b]malefactors that were hanged railed on him, saying, Art not thou the Christ? save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost thou not even fear God, who art in the same condemnation? And we indeed [c]justly; for we are receiving the due reward of what we have done: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said, Jesus,* [d]remember me, when thou comest in† thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day thou shalt be with me in [e]paradise.

[b] *cf.* Matt. 27. 44.

[c] *cf.* ch. 18. 13.

[d] *cf.* Matt. 25. 31, etc.

[e] *cf.* Rev. 2. 7. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 8 with 2 Cor. 12. 2–4.

*Or, "unto Jesus, Lord," but the oldest MSS. read generally with the text; and the alteration to this is more probable than the reverse.

†Some editors read "into."

Here was the secret of the Cross unveiled as the mystery of salvation; and for the Jew with his ritual of sacrifice not to understand it seems to us now almost incomprehensible. The veil was upon their heart, as the apostle declares. Pharisaic pride refused the humbling of the gospel. A Christ crucified was to the Jew a stumbling-block.

But it pleased God to give a lesson of salvation which was to accompany the story of the Cross, just in the place where every eye directed to that Cross should see it. Suddenly the voice of one of the malefactors rebukes his fellow. He, a dying man involved in the same sentence, does he not fear God, before whom he is soon going? does he not fear with that sin upon him which had brought them both justly where they were? but here was One who had done nothing amiss.

Then with this guilt upon himself also, and confessing it, he turns with the boldest possible prayer to this confessed Sinless One. "Jesus," he says,—"Jehovah Saviour,"—he could not be ignorant of the meaning of the name he uttered—"Jesus, remember me when Thou comest in Thy Kingdom." Immediately he is answered—more than answered—"Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

We can imagine many things, of course, as to what had inspired him with a faith like this. Whatever he may have known of the Lord, however, at a former time, both Matthew and Mark assure us that "those who were crucified with Him reviled Him." The fair meaning of this has been denied without reason. The fact seems mentioned as if for the purpose of cutting off those methods of making faith easier (and therefore less notable) in the dying man, and the grace of God necessarily, at the same time, less conspicuous also. We all are familiar with the saying, that "there was one such case, that none might despair; and there was but one, that none might presume." Let us rather say that here is a pattern case of salvation, outlined in the sharpest manner that could be imagined, and placed in the most conspicuous place that could be given to it. Without works, except bad works,—without sacrament or ritual of any kind,—by no slow process and by no conditional salvation,—this condemned malefactor is given at once the perfect assurance of a place that very day with his Lord in Paradise.*

Thus the answer of grace goes beyond even the boldness of such a prayer; and when indeed does not grace exceed all possible expectations? Who could have asked or thought that God would give His Son to die for sinners? and He who has done this, "how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

*For the efforts of materialistic annihilationists to break down the evidence, derived from this promise, of the consciousness of souls in the separate state, see "Facts and Theories of a Future State." Their arguments are briefly, that Paradise is in the new earth, and so not yet existent, although the apostle did not know but that he might have been bodily in it (2 Cor. xii. 3, 4). Then, as necessitated by this, that we ought to read, "I say to thee to-day;" or else "to-day" must mean "in the day of which you speak"!

3 (44–46): accomplishments.

3. And it was now [f]about the sixth hour; and there came a darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened. And the [g]veil of the temple was rent in the midst. And Jesus, when he had cried with a loud voice, said, Father, into thy hands I [h]commit my spirit. And when he had said this, he expired.

4 (47–49): Changes impending.

4. Now when the [i]centurion saw what took place, he glorified God, saying, In very deed this man was righteous. And all the multitudes that had come together to that sight, beholding what took place, returned, [j]smiting their breasts. And all his acquaintance stood afar off, and the women who followed him from Galilee, beholding these things.

5 (50–56): Intervention in divine government.

5. And behold, there was a man named [k]Joseph, who was a councillor, a good man and righteous: he had

[f] Matt. 27. 45. Mk. 15. 33. *cf.* Ps. 22. 1 with 1 Jno. 1. 5.
[g] Matt. 27. 51. Mk. 15. 38. *cf.* Heb. 9. 3–8, 11, 12 with Heb. 10. 19–22.
[h] *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 23. *cf.* Acts 7. 59.
[i] Matt. 27. 54. *cf.* Jno. 7. 45, 46.
[j] *cf.* Zech. 12. 10 with Rev. 1. 7.
[k] Matt. 27. 57–61. Mk. 15. 42–47; Jno. 19. 38–42; *cf.* Is. 53. 9.

How perfectly does all this suit the peace-offering Gospel! The mockery and insult call forth no response from the blessed Sufferer: He seems all unconscious of it. The need that sought Him, the faith that recognized under such disguise the Lord of glory, drew from the smitten Rock the living waters.

3. The record of divine accomplishment in that hour is told in the briefest way. The darkness that comes over the land is just mentioned, and traced to its cause, the darkening of the sun itself. There follows as connected with it the end of spiritual darkness. With the veil of the temple rent, the sanctuary is open, and God is in the light. This is the characteristic of Christianity, and the result of His entrance into that darkness of which the darkness of nature was but the external sign. Luke places the cause and effect together here, ignoring, as so often elsewhere, the order of time.

But with the cry of "Father," the darkness is ended: the cry of abandonment has been answered; the cup which alone He dreaded is drained (compare the notes on Matthew and Mark); He has but now in peace to depart. The death lying upon man has still to be taken for the perfecting of atonement: God must be owned in regard to the whole penalty on sin, and Matthew has shown us the resurrection of the saints as connected with this. For doctrinal statements of all that is involved here we must wait for the epistles; but here we have the work itself whose meaning they explain.

The word used in Luke for His dying is, as in Mark, "He expired"—"breathed out." It is the simple reality of death as man endures it, quite different from the terms used in Matthew and John. It is passive endurance; in the others activity of will, though in surrender. Here, as true Man, He dies like other men; committing His spirit to His Father, His work accomplished.

4. The faith of the Gentile centurion is recorded in a different form to that which it takes in the other Gospels: "he glorified God, saying, In very deed this Man was righteous." Righteous He is emphatically, not merely, as with others, in the comparative sense: this all that he has seen attests. Prompt and outspoken in his confession, the Gentile takes the first place now, as he has since done for many centuries. He is the first sign of the change impending.

But Luke shows us also a multitude of Jews returning heart-smitten from the spectacle of the cross. For Israel also there is hope in this precious death. We have learned also something of the significance of these ministering women who are seen waiting as the darkness lifts. Things are in transition: if the nation has rejected her King, God too is moving; His purposes in connection with His Son are not to be defeated.

5. The intervention of God is seen more evidently in the provision of a sepulcre suited for that incorruptible body: a sepulcre that has never seen corruption.

not consented to their counsel and deed. [He was] from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, one who waited for the kingdom of God. He went to Pilate, and asked for the body of Jesus. And having taken it down, he wrapped it in a linen robe, and laid him in a sepulcre that was hewn in rock, where [l]none had ever yet lain. And it was the day of the preparation, and the sabbath drew on. And the [m]women who had come with him from Galilee, following after, beheld the sepulcre, and how his body was laid. And they returned and prepared spices and ointments.

SUBDIVISION 3. (Chaps. xxiii. 56–xxiv.)

Resurrection and Ascension to Heaven.

1 (xxiii. 56-xxiv. 12): Alive!

1. AND on the sabbath-day they [n]rested according to the commandment; but on the [o]first day of the week, at early dawn, they came unto the sepulcre, bringing the spices which they had prepared.* And they found the [p]stone rolled away from the sepulcre;

*Some add, "and some others with them."

l cf. Acts 2. 24-31. *ctr.*2 Chro. 21. 1, etc. *cf.* Rom. 6. 8, 9.

m ch. 8. 2,3.

n Ex. 20. 8-11. *cf.*Col.2.13-17.

o Matt.28.1, etc. Mk. 16. 1, etc. Jno. 20. 1, etc. *cf.*1 Cor.15.

p cf. Jno.11. 38, 39. *cf.* Jno. 10. 18.

His grave appointed Him with wicked men, He is delivered from it, and is with the rich man after He has died. He is buried by a Joseph from Elkanah's and Samuel's city, Ha-Ramathaim, (or Arimathea,) the city of the "two heights": names which cannot but speak to us of the elevation which is to be His, and to which He is to lift His people, as the true Joseph in the advancement following His sufferings (*See Sam. i., notes*). In this connection the burial of Christ will have for us a deep significance, as the apostle shows us; but it would carry us too far now to speak of it.

The women still are here as watchers; and even though the new day has not shined upon them, they are heralds of it.

SUBD. 3.

The sorrow is past; the suffering is over; upon it all rises the glory of a serene and perfect day. The Lord risen, there is peace with God accomplished, acceptance in the Beloved; and with ascension, not only heaven opened, but (as another has said) "heaven furnished for us."

What strikes one especially in these resurrection scenes in Luke, as compared with the other Gospels, is the large place the word of God has in them. This is still, no doubt, the continuation of that Human Face which, as we have seen abundantly, the third Gospel presents to us. The word of God, as that by which in his true life man lives, (as He Himself affirms from Deuteronomy,) was that by which He walked and to which He ever appealed, which He honored and held up, whether before His own, or His enemies. In these last scenes it assumes peculiar prominence. In the journey to Emmaus it is that by which He leads the perplexed disciples to a firmer faith before He manifests Himself to them in the breaking of bread. Afterwards with the eleven He refers to what is written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Himself, and opens their understanding to understand the Scriptures. His ascension is to be a new light over all, the basis of mysteries hidden in the Old Testament itself and which necessitate a new testimony afterwards to be committed to a fresh apostle sent forth from Christ in glory, and which is distinctively what he calls it in one place, "the gospel of the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 4, R. V.).

1. The light of the resurrection morning dawns with comparative slowness in Luke's Gospel. Even because it is the Gospel of peace, we are made to see all

but entering in, they found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, while they were in perplexity about this, behold also, [q] two men stood by them in shining apparel. And as they were filled with fear, and bowed their faces to the ground, they said unto them, Why seek ye the [r] living one among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he [s] spake to you while he was still in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered up into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again. And they [t] remembered his words, and returning from the sepulcre brought back the tidings to the eleven and to all the rest. Now it was Mary of Magdala, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and the others with them, who told these things to the apostles. And their words appeared unto them as an idle tale, and they [u] disbelieved them. But [v] Peter rising up, ran unto the sepulcre; and, stooping down, he seeth the linen clothes lying there alone, and went away home, wondering at what had come to pass.

2 (13–35): Conflict, the ministry of the Word and communion.

2. And behold, [w] two of them were going that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem sixty furlongs* off. And they conversed with one an-

*Greek "stadia."

[q] *cf.* Acts 1. 10. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 12.

[r] *cf.* Rev. 1. 18. *cf.* Col. 3. 1.

[s] Mk. 9. 30–32.

[t] *cf.* Jno. 2. 22.

[u] ver. 25.

[v] *cf.* ch. 9. 20. ver. 34.

[w] *cf.* Mk. 16. 12, 13.

the exercise and perplexity about it, and have that upon which all peace rests established upon the surest foundations. Here at first we have but the announcement, "He is alive," carried to the apostles by those who had themselves been only taking their spices to the grave to complete His burial, and hide away for ever their best hopes!

The angels' announcement has in the very fact that it is by angels an air of distance in it, intensified by the reserve and reproof pervading the message. They do not even promise a meeting with Him: He is alive; had He not told them He would rise? why seek the living One among the dead? The women are perplexed and terrified; the apostles sceptical: these are tales, idle tales, bred in the minds of enthusiastic and visionary women: just the thought of a noted sceptic of these latter days. Peter runs, however, to the sepulcre: nothing is said of his companion, John, who will relate the visit in his own Gospel. He sees the linen clothes lying, their tenant gone, and departs, wondering.

2. We are now made to accompany two disciples, of whom we have heard nothing before and shall hear nothing again, and of whom we only know the name of one, Cleopas, upon a sorrowful walk to Emmaus, a village sixty furlongs outside Jerusalem. Their backs upon the city at such a time, and under the peculiar circumstances which they themselves relate, is surely significant. Perplexity and discouragement have taken hold of them; and in such a condition a backward course is inevitable.*

*There is something in the names that impresses us, though one may fail in giving them their proper application. Yet if we believe that every jot and tittle of the inspired Word have meaning, we cannot refuse to see significance in such points as these. Cleopas seems then to mean "All," or "every one," "a glory." The village to which he is going, if we accept the form that used to be given to the word, means "a despised people." Here is contrast, certainly, and one in agreement with a backward (and downward) course. It would remind us naturally of Israel according to the glory with which God in His promises has clothed her (see Rev. xii., the "woman clothed with the sun") and her condition, with Christ her glory renounced. The unbelief of the disciples tended to identify them with this lapsed condition, though divine love was about to recall them—could not possibly leave them to a path like this. But this is only a suggestion as to the meaning.

other about all these things that had taken place. And it came to pass as they conversed and questioned, that Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their [x]eyes were holden that they did not know him. And he said unto them, What things are these that ye confer about as ye walk, and are downcast? And one of them, named Cleopas, answered and said to him, Dost thou alone sojourn in Jerusalem, and knowest not the things that are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said to him, Concerning Jesus the Nazarene, who was a [y]prophet mighty in word and deed before God and all the people; and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him up to the sentence of death, and crucified him. But *we* trusted that it was he who is going to redeem Israel. But besides all these things, it is going on the third day since these things took place. And withal, certain [z]women from among us astonished us, having been very early at the sepulcre, and not finding his body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, who say that he is alive. And some of those with us went to the sepulcre, and found it even so as the women said; but him they saw not. And he said to them, O senseless and slow of heart to believe all that the [a]prophets have spoken; was it not needful that the Christ should [b]suffer these things, and enter into his glory? And beginning from Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning [c]himself. And they drew near to the village whither they were going, and he made as though he would go further. And they [d]constrained him, saying, Abide with us; for it is towards evening, and the day is now far spent: and he went in to abide with them. And it came to pass, as he was at table with them, he [e]took the bread, and blessed it, and having broken it he gave it to them. And their [f]eyes were

x *cf.* Jno.20. 14, 15. *cf.* Jno.21.4. *ctr.* 2 Cor.3. 18.

y *cf.* ch.9.19. *cf.* Matt.21. 11.

z vers. 1-11.

a *cf.* Acts 3. 24.

b *cf.* 1 Pet.1. 10-12. *cf.* Heb.2.9, 10.

c *cf.* Rev.19. 10. *cf.* Rom.1.3.

d *cf.* Gen.18. 1-8. *cf.* Jno. 14. 23.

e *cf.* ch.9.16. *cf.* ch.22.19.

f *cf.* Ps. 119. 18. *cf.* Gal.1.16. *cf.* 1 Jno.3.2.

While, then, they were on the road discussing the events that had happened, "Jesus Himself drew near and went with them." It is a sign of their condition that "their eyes were holden, that they did not know Him." In answer to His inquiries, the whole thing comes out, and "we trusted that it had been He who is going to redeem Israel" tells the tale of doubt and trouble. Yet they have heard the women's story of His being alive, and of Peter's visit to the sepulcre. What to think they know not.

Then, with a reproof for their unbelief, He begins to unfold the long prophetic burden of the ages past, through Moses and all the prophets following: their hearts burning within them as faith is rekindled at the sacred fire. They reach the village while He is reciting; and there they stay the wondrous Stranger from passing on, as He appears ready to do. Constrained by their solicitude, He enters the house to abide with them. There, in the breaking of bread He is revealed to them at last.

It is striking the character of all this: the first announcement made to women; here, before the apostles, two simple disciples are taken up to be ministered to, and with painstaking earnestness to bring them back to simplicity of faith. When

opened, and they knew him; and he vanished from them. And they said one to another, Did not our heart [g] burn within us, as he spake unto us in the way, and as he opened to us the scriptures? And rising up that same hour, they returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and those with them, saying, In very deed the Lord is risen, and hath [h] appeared to Simon. And they related the things [that had taken place] upon the way, and how he was known by them in the breaking of bread.

[g] *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 8. *cf.* Jno. 20. 29–31.

[h] 1 Cor. 15. 5.

3 (36–53): Into the Sanctuary

1 (36–43): Himself.

3. [1] And as they spake these things, he himself [i] stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they, being excited and possessed with fear, supposed that they beheld a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my [j] hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a [k] spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me to have. And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. And while they believed not still for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here anything to [l] eat? And they gave him part of a broiled fish [and of a honeycomb].* And he took it and ate before them.

[i] *cf.* Jno. 20. 19, 20. *cf.* Mk. 16. 14.

[j] *cf.* 1 Jno. 1. 1. *cf.* Zech. 13. 6.

[k] *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 20. *cf.* Phil. 3. 21.

[l] *cf.* Acts 10. 40, 41. *cf.* Gen. 18. 8.

2 (44–49): the Word in witness.

[2] And he said unto them, These are my words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be [m] fulfilled that are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, con-

[m] *cf.* Acts 13. 27, 29. *cf.* Acts 17. 3.

*Some omit.

they come back to Jerusalem, they find that He has appeared unto Simon; and we realize that here there is more pastoral work of the same tender sort. This appearing, however, is not given us anywhere at large, as we might have expected. They meet, as it were in secret, the Lord and His failed disciple, before He meets them together, Peter and the rest of the eleven. The tender style of all this, how like the Lord it is! How unofficial, too. It is plain that this is One who is going to be Himself the Shepherd of every individual soul of His, and not put them into the hands of some ecclesiastical go-between. It is, "One is your Teacher, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." Scripture is used, and they are built up with it: no miracles take the place of it: we hear again the Voice that said, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

3. [1] But the time is now come for fuller manifestation; and we see Him presently in the midst of the gathering of His people, inviting them to assure themselves fully of the reality of what they behold. With the doors shut, as John expressly tells us, His appearance in the midst impresses itself upon them as that of His bodiless spirit rather than the reappearance of the One they knew so well as He had lived and moved among them. In the tenderest way He invites them to make proof of His being in the body, to look at and handle Him, with the very wounds He had received still upon Him. When even yet, because of the greatness of the joy, they cannot realize it, he takes of the food they give Him and eats before them. It is the blessed fact and its full certification to those who are to be His witness that are put before us in Luke, and not yet the doctrines in connection with it, which are to be given us elsewhere.

[2] The Word is again appealed to, and His solemn testimony given to the written Word as it existed in His day, His sufferings and resurrection being a special

cerning me. Then [n]opened he their mind to understand the scriptures; and he said unto them, Thus it is written, [and thus it was needful] * that the Christ should [o]suffer, and [p]rise from among the dead the third day; and that [q]repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Ye are [r]witnesses of these things. And behold, I send forth the [s]promise of my Father upon you; but do ye remain in the city [of Jerusalem] † [t]until ye be clothed with power from on high.

3 (50-53): Christ in heaven.

3 And he led them out as far as [u]Bethany; and lifting up his hands, he [v]blessed them. And it came to pass, as he blessed them, that he was separated from them and [w]carried up into heaven.

And they [x]worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great [y]joy, and were continually in the [z]temple, praising and blessing God.

n cf. Acts 16. 14. cf. Jno. 16. 13.
o cf. Is. 53. cf. Ps. 22.
p cf. Ps. 16. 8-11. cf. Ps. 17. 15.
q Acts 2. 38. Acts 20. 21.
r cf. Acts 1. 21, 22. cf. Acts 2. 32. cf. 1 Cor. 15. 4-9.
s Jno. 14. 16, 17. Acts 1. 8.
t Acts 1. 4, 14 with Acts 2. 1-4.
u Jno. 12. 1.
v cf. Jno. 20. 19.
w Mk. 16. 19, 20. cf. Eph. 4. 10.
x cf. Rev. 5.

* The weight of authority seems to be against these words.
† These words are doubtful.

8-14; *cf.* Heb. 1. 6. *y ctr.* ver. 17; *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 8. *z* Acts 2. 46, etc.; *cf.* Heb. 13. 10-16.

part of this prophetic witness. Repentance and remission of sins are to be preached to all nations in the name of the Risen One; Jerusalem, guilty above all, to be first addressed. Thus Luke maintains its character to the end. Nothing is said of miraculous attestation, nor of baptism: the gospel is left in its own sufficiency. But they, its witnesses, are to be clothed with the power of the Spirit, the promise of the Father, sent by Himself: a step in advance of both Matthew and Mark, and in the line of the Acts and Paul.

3 The gospel is to be first addressed to Jerusalem, but He does not ascend from thence, but from Bethany. "From thence He had set out to present Himself as King to Jerusalem. It was there that the resurrection of Lazarus had taken place; there that the family which present the character of the remnant—attached to His Person, now rejected, with better hopes—in the most striking manner received Jesus. It was thither He retired when His testimony to the Jews was ended; that His heart might rest for a few moments among those He loved; who, through grace, loved Him. It was there that He established the link (as to circumstances) between the remnant attached to His Person and heaven. From thence He ascends." (*Synopsis.*)

He ascends with His hands stretched out in blessing, to take that place before God in which He abides, the Representative of His people, the Head of blessing for them. While Israel and the earth wait for His return to find what the Old Testament has pledged in their behalf, His place in heaven is the sign of a new order of blessing which the "mysteries" of Christianity are to take up and unfold to us. Luke is here again the precursor of Paul; while John has first his own glories to display, which, while seen on earth, are essentially of heaven; and at last will unite heaven and earth together, as surely as He in whom we recognize them unites already in His Person, in one indissoluble perfection, God with Man.

SCOPE AND DIVISIONS OF JOHN.

JOHN, as the final Gospel, is that which above all displays the glory of the Person of Christ as the Divine Word tabernacling in flesh, the Only-begotten Son of the Father. In it, therefore, as in suited connection with this, is seen the divine work in man in its full reality. The results of the previous Gospels are brought forward, and as tested by Christ in it, the Cross has shown the world to be at enmity with God. Man is but flesh, and must be born again to see the Kingdom of God. He is dead Godward, and Christ is here the Eternal Life, the Light of men; and communicating life that they may receive the revelation. Eternal Life is thus the central truth of the book, and in connection with it the Spirit of God is seen as Communicator and Perfecter of it. The whole Triune Godhead is thus displayed in the activity of divine grace towards men. Thus John is also necessarily and pre-eminently, the apostle of love: for God in the activity of His nature is Love.

The aspect of the Lord's work in atonement is that of the burnt-offering; the sweet savor of perfect obedience under the full stress of trial: the fire of sacrifice bringing out nothing else but this.

The development of these truths in the Gospel is such as needs little introduction; John being so much more doctrinal than historical, for the most part a collection of discourses, the subject of each strongly marked, and making the divisions very clear and simple. As in the two preceding Gospels, the main divisions are three:—

1. (Chaps. i.–ii. 22): The eternal life in Christ its Source, the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.
2. (Chaps. ii. 23–xvii.): Eternal life as communicated and dependent.
3. (Chaps. xviii.–xxi): The perfected offering, and Life in the Risen One.

NOTES.

Div. 1.

THE first division gives us eternal life in the Person of the Word become flesh; carrying us back to eternity to behold His glory before any creature existed, and to show us in Him the Creator of all. In relation to the Father He reveals in manhood the glory of the Eternal, Only-begotten Son; and in Him God, hidden under law, is fully revealed in grace and truth. But this implies also the communication of eternal life to men, that, born of God, and having title to the place of children, they may be able to receive the revelation.

Faith utters its voice in His herald John, proclaiming His glory as the Eternal: for sinners, the Lamb of sacrifice; for saints, baptizing with the Holy Spirit. And now begins the drawing unto Him as such: first we see those who learn from Him where He abides and abide with Him,—characteristically, a heavenly company; then Nathanael, coming to Him as the One of whom Moses and the prophets wrote, owns Him as the Son of God and King of Israel: characteristic of an Israelitish, earthly one. We then see how He waits for the divinely appointed hour for Israel's blessing, when once their purification is more than a hollow form. And lastly, the evil which has hindered God dwelling in His house on earth, is purged out, so that He may return. Through all it is Christ who, as the expression of the mind and will of God (the Word), acts for Him, giving Him at last His rest for ever.

Subd. 1.

The Life as the Light of men is the theme of the first subdivision; the Word made flesh its full and glorious display. Creation as His work is a revelation also; but darkness having come in with sin, it is no longer a sufficient one. Hence the Word Himself enters the creation He has made, and God is manifest in a new glory among men.

But man is not naturally a seeker after God, unhappy only in not having found Him. No: he has turned his back upon Him, and must be born again, and that not of his own will, in order that he may receive the glorious revelation. The communication of eternal life in this is not openly declared as yet; but those who are born of God have now the title to become His children.

1. John begins "in the beginning." There is no article; and the indefinite form, as the whole connection shows, here carries us back to the most remote that can be imagined. Whenever anything else began, then "the Word *was*," —not "began." The Word had no beginning.

By the fact of this eternity of existence He is necessarily God: God only is the "Eternal;" but the apostle will not leave us to such an inference: "the Word was with God," he says, "and the Word was God,"—a distinct Person in the unity of the Godhead.

"*With* God" here is literally "*toward* God"; and this affirms, along with distinctness of Person, the adherence of regard and affection to Him of this Being whose designation as "the Word" points Him out as giving expression to the mind of God. And this Personality and relationship are eternal likewise: the Word is not a development from God, even though a pre-creation one: for "He was in the beginning *with* God."

Thus a glimpse is permitted us into what is involved in a plurality of Persons in the Godhead. "God is love:" and are we to think of Him before creation as dwelling in a blank and utter solitude, alone, with no outflow for His love? no object towards which it *could* flow out? even now with no sufficient object worthy of Himself? And He, the Father, was He no Father then? and have His creatures alone given Him the reality of such a title? Nay, there was in the Godhead as such, as this passage already shows, an activity, a reception, an intercommunion of love: "the Word was *with* God," *toward* God. The Only-

JOHN.

DIVISION 1. (Chaps. i.–ii. 22.)

The Eternal Life in Christ, its Source, the Only-begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.

SUBDIVISION 1. (Chap. i. 1–18.)

The Life the Light.

1 (1-4): The Creator, and the Light in its Source.

1. IN [the] [a]beginning was the [b]Word; and the Word was [c]with God; and the Word was [d]God.* He† was in [the] beginning with God. All things

*The order of words in this last clause is in the original inverted, doubtless for additional emphasis:—"and *God* was the Word."
†"This One," (Gk.).

a Gen. 1. 1. cf. Col. 1. 17. cf. Ps. 90. 2.
b cf. Rev. 19. 13. cf. ver. 18.
c ch. 17. 5. cf. prov. 8. 22-31.
d cf. ch. 20. 28. cf. 1 Tim. 3. 16. cf. Heb. 1. 8.

begotten Son was then in the bosom of the Father. That "bosom of the Father" is not a development, but a glorious, everlasting reality.

Now we are given to see in the Word the actual Creator. "All things came into being through Him"; and again the apostle is emphatic as to this: not even a single thing must be excepted, that ever came into being.

We can easily recognize something of the significance of such a statement; but do we recognize how far it will lead us? If the Word be, as should be plain, the One who utters out the mind of God, does this merely show us that creation is the embodiment of that mind? that God willed, and the Word performed? Or does it not, at least, prepare us to believe that creation as His work would be a revelation of His character, His thoughts and purposes? This latter is the only sufficient and worthy reason for the emphasis laid upon the fact that the *Word* was the Creator. The action of the Word, then, was the speech of God: who, if He speak, speaks not simply because He will, but because He has something to communicate. What is it He has to speak of—He who surely cannot speak an idle word? If we can trust such thoughts, how far will they carry us? far beyond the point at which "natural theology," so-called, leaves us. It will be a little thing then to find that it shows, as any manufactured article might do, that some Being made it,—by the marks of design in it that it had a Designer. Nay, we shall realize it as that which,—written as a universal language which has never suffered from the judgment of Babel—God has used to utter His parables of divine wisdom in every attentive ear. True, they are parables, and need care to interpret them,—need diligence of heart to use the care; but so would lead into the most fruitful exercise of heart and conscience, if by them we sought believingly to draw near to God.

How naturally upon every theme whatever, the Lord's teaching fell into this form of parable, making the world vocal with divine monition and heavenly comfort! How naturally these analogies of spheres so different appeal to reason itself with the force of demonstration! How readily the Teacher above all teachers expects His disciples to apprehend such lessons, as if the key to all this symbolism were in their hands! "Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know *all* parables?" From Genesis to Revelation all Scripture teems with them: surely not applications of mere casual resemblances, but rather, real utterances of the Voice that speaks in them; and with which, if we are not familiar, it is to our shame that we are not.

But indeed, while in one of God's two Books we own Christ to be the theme, the book of nature speaks to most, it is to be feared, as if there were no Christ in it; though "by Him and for Him were all things created."

And how thankful we have reason to be for this symbolical character of nature

came into being [e]through him; and without him not one thing came into being which hath come into being. In him was [f]life; and the life was the [g]light of men.

e Heb. 1. 10. Col. 1. 16. 1 Cor. 8. 6.
f *cf.* ch. 5. 26. *cf.* 1 Jno. 1. 2.
g ch. 8. 12; ch. 12. 35, 36, 46.

when we consider that from this lower sphere all our words for the higher are derived. Were the one not really (and therefore divinely) adapted to the other, how surely would this lead us astray! On the other hand to take them frankly as thus fitted to one another, how great a help should it be in the interpretation of spiritual things. But it must be confessed we are little practised in such explorations as this implies; even though Scripture and nature be allowed to be God's two witnesses; which should agree and confirm each other in their witness therefore.

We proceed now to the spiritual sphere, what was *in* the Word, not made by Him: for "in Him was Life, and the Life was the light of men." Many indeed take life here in the most comprehensive way, "the Word being the Source of all life to the creature," but the latter clause of the verse, it is admitted, can only refer to spiritual life. And how could this be classed with that of plant or beast, for instance? or said to be in Him? He is the Author of it: in that sense, the Source, though it be not exactly the right word for it. Life in Him, the Eternal, is surely eternal life; and having shown sufficiently for his purpose here the relation of the Word to creation generally, John at once proceeds to his grand subject. Only the eternal life could be the light of men.

A real definition of life it is generally confessed we have not. It belongs, indeed, to those essential mysteries in which so much of our knowledge is rooted. Of natural life we can only gather from its phenomena certain general ideas, which still ought to help us, if the natural and spiritual are in such close correspondence as we have claimed for them. What then can we learn phenomenally of natural life?

Life, as we read it in nature, is a spring of ordered activity which controls and manifests itself in the inanimate to which it has communicated itself. The dead material is taken up by it, assimilated, and formed into living tissue, and then into organs which work under the control of a common plan and purpose. Take the plant for example, in which you have the life force simply, without the presence of soul or spirit to perplex the results. Here then the stamp of mind is put upon that in which mind is not. It is the witness of a Mind beyond itself which works through and controls it everywhere in harmonious obedience.

Life is thus naturally self-communicative, propagates itself, proceeds from nothing else but life. This is conceded by science to-day, as far as science can speak in such a matter. It is a thing not manufactured nor evolved, not working up from below, not the product of dead matter, but an imperial power ruling this, even while freely yielding itself to it, permeating and so lifting it into a higher sphere, according to the constant law of progress disclosed by the world as a divine product.

But life in nature is haunted by its shadow, death; life in the Word is a Life eternal, "that eternal life," says the epistle, "which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." And how manifested? As life is always here, by self-communication to a lower nature, which could receive its impress and thus display a character beyond its own. "The Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us; and we beheld His glory: glory as of an Only-begotten with the Father, full of grace and truth." The mind and purposes of God were manifested in a humanity perfectly attuned to harmonious obedience to that will of God which was the one motive of His being in the world. Thus the Life was the light of men: the glory of Godhead was seen in perfect human righteousness: "As long as I am in the world," He says, "I am the light of the world." The Life is but the activity of His nature, (which is the divine nature,) which has taken up manhood in Him, to reveal itself thus, communicative and imperial.

2 (5-11): The conflict between light and darkness.

2. And the light shineth in [h]darkness, and the darkness [i]apprehended it not. There was a man [j]sent from God, whose name was John. He came for a witness, that he might bear witness concerning the light, that all might believe through him. *He* was [k]not the light, but to bear witness concerning the light. The true light was that which, coming* into the world, [l]lighteth every man. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, and the world [m]knew him not. He came unto his [n]own, and his own received him not.

*R. V. connects this clause with "every man;" there is nothing in the text to forbid either rendering.

h *cf.* Eph. 5. 8-13. *cf.* ch. 3. 19.
i *cf.* 1 Cor. 2. 14. *cf.* ch. 8. 43.
j ver. 33. Mal. 3. 1.
k ver. 20. *cf.* ch. 5. 35.
l ch. 9. 5.
m ver. 5. *cf.* 1 Cor. 2. 8.
n *cf.* Matt. 21. 33-39. *cf.* Ex. 4. 22.

2. But the next thing we hear of is darkness, and a darkness which the light as such cannot banish. It shines in it, but is not realized. This is the nature of spiritual darkness, which is not a mere absence of light, but in opposition to it. God is light; but man has his back upon God, and walks in his own shadow. He has not faith in God, and as he learned to distrust Him even in Eden, much more as out of Eden and under the consequences of his sin, which he puts to the discredit of his Maker. Thus everything is distorted, for God is the reason of all things, and if He be unknown, all things fall into confusion. Then we must do what we can for ourselves; self is all that is left us to believe in; a self which has lost all but the wreck of the image of God in which man was created.

Over all another shadow broods, of one "a liar from the beginning," and who has persuaded men to believe his lie. Under him darkness becomes a kingdom, and the power by which he reigns: "the god of this world blinds the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. iv. 4).

In such a world was this glory now to be displayed. The inspired writer filled with his theme, does not pause to speak of how or how far in former times the light had shone for men: everything seems but contrast to the present revelation; which yet—such the world was—God cannot leave without calling special attention to it. Men must be roused to behold it, and by the voice of one nearer to them, as more upon their level, more intelligible to them, as echoing the voice of conscience in their hearts. Such indeed was the "man sent from God, whose name was John." But he is not yet heard in his testimony, as he will be presently. Simply the fact is given: God sent him, a witness to bear witness concerning the truth, that all might believe through him. What an assurance of a world far away from God, that the Light must have one to proclaim it, the Creator must have one to introduce Him into His own world; and then it is necessary to say, 'He was not that light," lest men should mistake the witness to Christ for the Christ he witnessed to!

The characteristic of the real light is given, that it is not local, but for all. Sunlike, men cannot hold it in Judea simply. The Baptist was "a burning and a shining light;" but not the day-Luminary, filling heaven and earth with splendor. This universal character, reprobated in its full reality by the narrow Jew, the Evangelist shows in its true glory. Did God create the Jew only? Thus "the *world*" is one of the prominent words in this Gospel: "God so loved," not Israel merely, but "the world." Zion on her hill-top might catch the first rays of the dawn: let her golden orb rise higher, and it will reach lower too.

Men are equalized after another fashion, and which will make needful either equal judgment or fullest grace. The Light finds everywhere darkness; and darkness which yields not to the Light as light. "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." Falsehood knows not truth, nor hatred love. But more: Israel had been specially prepared by centuries of special dealing for this very time; her own King, Messiah, Deliverer,

3 (12-18): The glory of the Word tabernacling in flesh revealed to men receiving out of His fulness.

3. But as many as [o]received him, to them he gave authority to become children of God,—to those believing on his name: who were [p]born, not of [q]blood, nor of the [r]will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

o 1 Jno. 5. 1. *cf.* Gal. 3. 26. p *cf.* ch. 3. 3-7. q *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 23. r *cf.* ch. 6. 63; *cf.* Rom. 8. 8.

at last had come to her, to fulfil all her promises: "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." The education of a race, and in the divine school, failed; and failed in the very thing which all was designed for.

3. The purpose of God cannot be defeated. The need which it had to meet is now fully declared. Claim there can be none on man's part. Israel is but as the Gentile, save that, with higher privilege, her guilt is greater. The Gospel of John begins where the other Gospels end, and with the Cross as the full revelation of man's condition, as it has never before been revealed: for, if under the law the mind of the flesh is shown hopelessly insubject to the law of God, now it is seen to be "enmity against God." But thus there must be not only a work done *for* man, such as the other Gospels have fully declared, but also a divine work done *in* him, which John alone presents in its entirety. He alone speaks of the new birth, quickening, eternal life as a present possession in the soul, as well as of the gift of the Spirit, which gives it its full and "abundant" character. With him, first, the children of God by faith are recognized in their place as such, and the Lord in resurrection sends the message of His coming ascension to His "brethren."

We have now already the new birth and the new place announced, in which the will of God rises above the opposition of His fallen creature, and displays itself in a grace which draws near to Him the objects of His unsought love. "To as many as received Him, to them He gave authority to become children of God,—to those believing in His Name." This is, of course, the distinguishing mark of these, that in opposition to His own people Israel, who did not receive Christ, they received Him, thus distinguishing their faith from a mere conviction of the mind. Their belief was such as made them desire and accept Him. His Name—Jesus, the Saviour—becoming the discovery of One who met their divinely awakened need. To these He gave authority to take a place never before possessed by men in the reality of what is involved in it, as children of God by birth and nature. The sonship of the Old Testament was not founded upon this, and carried with it no assurance of salvation nor of spiritual life. God was a Father to Israel, who was thus His "son," His "first-born" (Ex. iv. 2; Jer. xxxi. 9). In the passage in Jeremiah it is "*Ephraim* is My first-born." In Mal. i. 6 He asks, "If I be a Father, where is Mine honor?" In chap. ii. 10, the sense in which He is called so is seen: "Have we not all one Father? has not one God *created us?*" And similarly in Isa. lxiv. 8, we have the appeal to Him: "But now, O Lord, Thou art our Father: we are the clay and Thou our potter, and we all are the work of Thy hand." In the preceding chapter (lxiii. 16) they cry, "Thou art our Father, our Redeemer" (*Goel*, "Kinsman-Redeemer"); but it is power that they seek to come in for them, as in Egypt. In all these cases, which are all that are in the prophets, the fatherly relationship, though assumed towards Israel in a special way, is founded upon creation.

With this title of first-born, therefore, which is given to Israel, is associated the thought of supremacy upon earth; and in the eighty-ninth psalm it is given to Messiah in the same way: "He shall cry unto Me, Thou art my Father. . . . Also I will make him My first-born, higher than the kings of the earth" (vers. 26, 27).

In both Psalms and Proverbs, God is *compared* to a father, and here the tenderest thoughts are expressed: "*Like as* a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him" (Ps. ciii. 13). But here too, what we are by creation immediately comes in: "For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." Again in Proverbs (iii. 11, 12), we find what the apostle has quoted in the epistle to the Hebrews; "My son, despise not thou the chas-

And the Word [r]became flesh, and [t]tabernacled among us; and we beheld his [u]glory, the glory as of an [v]Only-begotten with the Father, full of [w]grace and truth.

[s] *cf.* ch. 6. 33, 42. [t] *cf.* 2 Cor. 8. 9. [u] *cf.* Phil. 2. 6-8; *cf.* Heb. 10. 5; *cf.* Lk. 1. 35. [v] *cf.* Ex. 25. 8, etc. with Matt. 1. 23. [w] *cf.* ch. 2. 11; *cf.* Matt. 3. 17. [x] ch. 3. 16; *cfr.* Rom. 8. 29. [y] ver. 17; *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 19.

tening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction: for whom the Lord loveth He correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."

Conversely, the angels are sons of God (Job i. 6; ii. 1; xxxviii. 7), most clearly in the same creative way, and as Paul quotes to the Athenians from one of the Greek poets that "we are His offspring" (Acts xvii. 28). God is thus the "Father of spirits" (Heb. xii. 9), and the possession of a spiritual nature constitutes that image of God in which we are created; though, if man does not answer to the relationship, that relation cannot be acknowledged. Thus the Lord could say to the unbelieving Jews, "If God were your Father, ye would love Me . . . ye are of your father the devil" (John viii. 42, 44)—men such as the devil, and not God, had made them.

This is the Old Testament idea of children, which reaches out after the New Testament idea, but without being able to attain the blessedness of this, founded as it is upon a new creation, a new life and nature, where no fall can again mar what the sovereign grace of God has accomplished. Children of God there were, of course, from the beginning; but now for the first time they are given to take the place of children, owned as such because they have so believed on Christ's name as to have received Him. What underlies this and justifies it is that they are the subjects of a true divine work. They are born again, not of blood—the way of natural birth; not of the will of the flesh,—man in his fallen condition; nor of the will of man—even when renewed; but of God, and God only.

Now the glory of the Light can be seen, the glory of the antitypical tabernacle, to which that of old pointed. Wisdom's delights were of old with the children of men; when Christ was born, the angels celebrated it; but it is John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, who lay on His breast, and gathered there the full intelligence of his position, who has revealed to us this new manifestation. "The Word became flesh," he says, "and tabernacled among us; and we beheld His glory; the glory as of an Only-begotten with the Father, full of grace and truth."

God had from the beginning visited His people. With a redeemed people, though it were only the shadow of the later redemption, the witness of what was in His heart was given, and the Pillar of Cloud and Fire became the Leader of His people from the border of Egypt into the land. But all this only prepared the way for the full reality which now appeared: the Word, the personal Wisdom of God, became *flesh*. An expression is used which most completely declares the reality of manhood into which He entered. It was not some docetic form of it, but the verity of that which we know as such, and which most implies the weakness of the creature. And that He *became* flesh imports this manhood, not as something outside of or other than His true Self, but assumed into it. While yet this was not, nor could be, transmuted Deity, but the Tabernacle of Deity: the divine and human not being confused together, but united; the Word tabernacling among us by becoming flesh. The Glory beheld was of an *Only*-begotten with the Father: One in whom the divine nature was, not as what might be in some true sense communicable to the creature, but in a way unique, peculiar to Himself; not derived, therefore, from the Manhood He assumed, but His relationship in the Godhead; "*with* the Father" implying that communion in the Godhead, the necessary result of this.

The Glory was not hidden, as of old, but beheld—by those that had eyes for it. That which was even necessary goodness under the law, the barrier that kept men from intruding where they could not stand, ceased to be any longer: it was now in grace that God was revealed; grace which did not moreover hide the truth, but prepared the soul for its reception and endeared it evermore.

John beareth witness of him and hath cried, saying, This is he of whom I said, He that [x]cometh after me is come to be before me: for he was before* me. And† of his [y]fulness have we all received, and grace upon grace. For the [z]law was given through Moses; grace and truth came to be through Jesus Christ. No one hath [a]seen God at any time: the Only-begotten Son, who is in the [b]bosom of the Father, *he* hath declared him.

x ver. 30.
y *cf.* Col. 1. 19. *cf.* Col. 2. 3, 9, 10.
z Ex. 20. 1, etc. *cf.* Gal. 3. 19. *cf.* Rom. 10. 4-10.
a Ex. 33. 20. *cf.* 1 Tim. 6. 16. *cf.* Col. 1. 15.
b *cf.* Prov. 8. 30. *cf.* ch. 14. 31. *cf.* Col. 2. 2.

* Literally, "first," or "chief."

† Most of the earliest MSS. have "for"; but the earliest versions seem to balance this.

The aspect of the truth was invitation, not repulsion; it preached of life and not of death.

The witness of John to the deity of Christ is appended to this. Strictly it is to His pre-existence; but the one involves the other. No angel could leave the sphere in which God created him, and the Arian view of Christ's Person has no countenance in the Old Testament. So fully is this the case that in his first epistle John can say "come in flesh" as equivalent to declaring the divine-human Person. "He that cometh after me," says the Baptist, "has come to be before me:" He has come into a greater place. And no wonder! "for He was before me." And there, as it seems, the voice of the Church, by the lips of the evangelist, breaks in.* "And out of His fulness have we all received, and grace upon grace." It was grace that even at the second giving of the law could reveal along with this "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." But still that left the law, nay, even the more *made* it a "ministration of death" for man, as showing the awful reality of his condition. As long as man stands on the footing of his own responsibility before God, his state is hopeless; only Christ before God for him can suffice. And this alone is "grace upon grace," that which we receive from Him,—grace that is *all* grace, without mixture or limit.

Accordingly, the law is put in contrast with this: "the law was given through Moses;" the second tables were written, not by the "finger of God," but by the mediator's hand. But the mediator himself could not behold face to face the glory of the Lord,—could see nothing but His "back parts:" could not see God and live. Still it remains, therefore, spite of all that was declared to him, that "no one hath seen God at any time." But the Only-begotten Son hath not only seen Him: as the Son of His love, in the Father's bosom, He hath declared Him—told Him out. Thus "grace and truth came to be" for us "through Jesus Christ." It is a grace which is identified with truth, as the singular verb joined to the two nominatives shows. It is not, as when the law was given, grace based upon a supposed condition in man,—a condition found not to exist. This caused the inadequacy of law, with whatever limitation: man must be depended on in some way: but in fact, "wherein is he to be accounted of?" The law is helpless, therefore; while the fulness of grace in Christ supposes nothing in man, except a most real need to be met out of this fulness. Here, if there were failure, it would be Christ who failed; and that is impossible. Grace and truth exist together for us now in Christ; and God in righteousness and love is told out fully in the One Mediator, who in Person and work brings God and man together.

SUBD. 2.

The first eighteen verses are, in fact, the witness of God as to Christ—a revelation. Who could know of the Word in eternity, the Creator; or of the Only-

* There is a similar out-burst in praise and testimony at the commencement of another book of John, Revelation (i. 5-7).

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chap. i. 19–34.)

The witness of faith.

1 (19-28): The Forerunner: himself the testimony.

1. AND this is the witness of John, when the Jews [c]sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem, to ask him, Who art *thou?* And he confessed, and denied not; and he confessed, I am [d]not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou [e]Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou the [f]prophet? And he answered, No. They said to him therefore, Who art thou? that we may give answer to those who sent us: what sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the [g]voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of [the] Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. And they

c ch. 5. 33.
d *cf.* Lk. 3. 15-17. ch. 3.28, 30.
e *cf.* Matt. 17. 10-12. *cf.* Matt.11. 14.
f *cf.* Deut.18. 15-19. Acts 3. 22, 23.
g Matt. 3. 3. Is. 40. 3. *cf.*2 Cor.13. 3.

begotten Son in the Father's bosom, or of the Word incarnate, except by revelation? But now man is given his place, and allowed to tell his story from his own side,—to show how he has come to rejoice in Christ; and we are called now to listen to the Baptist in this character of witness to his Lord.

1. It is a blessed testimony, and shows us, as the other Gospels scarcely do, the bright side of what elsewhere seems a life so shadowed. But in them we see him rather in his witness to the nation—which is, of course, a witness about Christ too; but more in His relation also to the nation and where their present state spoke sadly of what was to be the outcome of his presentation to them. With Pharisees and Sadducees coming out in their hollow fashion to his baptism of repentance, a vipers' brood, as he calls them, his testimony is largely a warning of coming judgment. The axe is already at the root of the trees, and they must not plead their being children of Abraham as exemption from the wrath at hand. He who comes is going to purge His floor and gather (it is true) His wheat into the garner; but the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire. Corresponding to all this is the figure of the preacher in the wilderness, his leathern girdle fastened round his garment of hair. Of this aspect of John's ministry we find here little indeed: for here he is not standing in the presence of the people, but in Another Presence of which he is come to speak. He is standing in the glory of that Light which is in the world, and he is transfigured by it. The austerity has passed out of manner and form, and become the tender abstraction of the worshiper. They come after him, attracted by what they more readily understand, priests and Levites from Jerusalem, seeking the man able thus to stand alone, while with his words he bows the multitudes before him: they find one bowing himself in abasement deeper than that of his stricken hearers. Only not in the shadow, but in the light; not in the alarm of an awakened conscience, but in the joy of a heart that has found its rest in faith.

They came to ask him, "Who art *thou?*" "And he confessed, and denied not," says the exultant Spirit; "and he confessed, I am *not the Christ.*" Was it not, after all, but a small thing to say *that?* Yes; but it was the manner of his saying it, unasked, as one who knew in his soul that Christ whom men needed, so as to need nothing else. What did it matter what he himself was, when he and they (but in how different fashion) were standing in the presence of His glory; and they ignorant of it? But they go on: "What then? art thou Elias?" And he saith, "I am not." "Art thou that prophet?"—the Prophet of whom Moses had spoken, and whom they did not know to be Christ also: and he answered, "No;"—shorter and shorter, as one who would be quit of it; but they will not leave it there. "They said to him, therefore, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us: what sayest thou of *thyself?* He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord"—of Jehovah—"as said the prophet Esaias."

had been sent from the Pharisees; and they asked him, and said unto him, [h] Why baptizest thou then, if thou art not the Christ, nor Elias, nor the prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with [i] water: there standeth one in the midst of you, whom ye [j] know not; he who coming after me hath come to be before me;* the latchet of whose shoe I am not [k] worthy to unloose. These things took place in Bethany,† beyond Jordan, [l] where John was baptizing.

[h] *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 13-15. *cf.* Acts 19. 4.
[i] Matt. 3. 11. *cf.* Heb. 10. 4.
[j] ver. 5.
[k] Matt. 3. 14. *cf.* ch. 3. 29, 30. *cf.* Matt. 11. 11.
[l] Lk. 3. 3.

* The earliest versions here again are in opposition to some of the earliest MSS., which have only, "he who cometh after me."
† Not "Bethabara," as the common version.

Vox et præterea nihil: a "voice,"—scarcely a person; a voice whose whole value lies in the message that it brings; a voice, which of necessity must pass away, but which may do a work that shall not pass; here a voice that shall bring to the souls of men the imperishable Word which shall abide for ever. We cannot but realize the voice in John thus to be in suited relation to the Word, which is Christ, and of whom as such the Gospel speaks. Nor is there a moan in this over his mere brief apparition among men. What are men that a name among them and a following from them should be a thing to covet? Nay; but there *is* a Seeker of men, and for whom they have value, not as aught but as naught; as helpless, astray, lost, ruined. *That* the speaker knew; and knowing, spoke of it with a joy that would not permit him to be silent, nor permit him to stand before their eyes to hide or lessen the glory which was before his own.

But those who had been sent were of the Pharisees, and they saw nothing; nor, as conscious of their need, did they heed the testimony. They had misinterpreted the ages past, and here was the voice of those ages, and it was strange and distant, and the light in the eyes of him who spoke, had they not seen it before in many a fanatic? But, keen ritualists as they were, they had rightful question with him now, founded on his own confession: for, if he were neither Christ, nor Elias, nor the Prophet, why did he baptize?

In fact, it was a boldness unheard of to impose such a baptism upon Israelites: he a man without miracle to attest him, with nothing indeed save his own unworldly life, and that fervent appeal to the conscience which awoke it to its office, with the startling announcement of heaven's Kingdom and its King at hand. Meet him on the ground of Scripture or of fact they could not; but it was easier to question his personal right to such a prerogative as he claimed, of which they too were the prescriptive judges. But John answers them in his own strange fashion by an attack upon all ritualism in its very essence. Baptize? yes, he baptized—*with water!* Water symbolically might have deepest meaning; otherwise it could but put away the filth of the flesh. Water does water's work: for which its Maker ordained it. Why make much of this, while in the midst of them stood One, unknown, unnoticed, so great that the Baptist, as he declares, was unworthy to do for Him a menial's office, and had derived from Him all the significance he had.

Thus John was in his person a witness for his Lord. He not merely *had* a voice to speak for Him: he *was* that voice. Delivered from the common cravings of men, and standing apart from their contending interests but not their needs, Christ had delivered, Christ sufficed for him. As another could say afterwards, and with fuller intelligence, John could have said in his measure with equal truth, Christ lived in him; Christ's interests absorbed and energized him. A beautiful testimony! His voice might utter itself in the wilderness; his heart abode amid the "precious fruits brought forth by the Sun" which shone upon him, a man "filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb."

2 (29-31): The Sin-bearer and Saviour.

2. On the morrow he seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the [m]Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. He it is of whom I said, [n]After me cometh a man who is come to be before me: for he [o]was before me. And I [p]knew him not; but that he might be made [q]manifest to Israel, therefore did I come baptizing with water.

3 (32-34): anointed and baptizing with the Spirit.

3. And John bare witness, saying, I beheld the [r]Spirit descending like a dove out of heaven; and it abode upon him. And I knew him not, but he who sent me to baptize with water, *he* said unto me, Upon whom

m ver. 36. *cf.* Gen. 22. 7, 8. *cf.* Ex. 12. 3-5. *cf.* Is. 53. 7. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 18-20. *cf.* Rev. 5. 6.
n vers. 15, 27.
o *cf.* ch. 8. 58. *cf.* Col. 1. 17.
p ver. 33. *cf.* Lk. 1. 80. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 16.
q *cf.* Lk. 1. 17.
76. r Matt. 3. 16; Mk. 1. 10; Lk. 3. 21, 22.

2. But with these men for his hearers John cannot get his heart out; as on their part there is no movement of the heart towards the blessed One of whom he testifies. With other audience upon the morrow his joy breaks out; and we see how fully he is one with all whoever since have found in Jesus the rest and satisfaction of their souls. "He seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." Thus we see how his faith has taken refuge in a Sin-bearer and Saviour, the only Saviour of the world. We have at the outset here the broadest view of Christ's sacrifice, as characteristically throughout the Gospel. The Baptist speaks also of "sin," not "sins." That which has been from the time of the fall ever in view in all God's dealings with the world will through this work be at last completely removed, and eternal righteousness established in its place. Meanwhile the broadest foundation is laid, for every one that will to rest on. Not Israel, not the saints, not even believers as such are given title here, but men as men, sinners with the consciousness of nothing else but sin; for for sinners the sacrifice for sin was offered; and though it be said most truly that only by faith do we receive the fruit of it, yet faith does not eye itself but its object, nor rest in any estimate of one's own condition (as to which we might be deceived) but upon the sure testimony of the Word both as to our condition and as to that which has met the condition.

Thus John's confession here is not too broad to allow of the simplest individual appropriation of it. The rock is not too broad to build upon. Every one is welcome: no question raised as to any one who comes; and none need raise a question.

John adds as to this Lamb of sacrifice his confession of Him as a divine Person, repeating his former words. He adds also that he had been (as the world itself) blind as to His glory. Yet that He might be made manifest to Israel was the whole purport of his own mission. It is the consciousness of the condition in which we were, out of which divine love and power alone have brought us that will enable us to rely upon the same grace for others, and upon nothing else but grace.

3. But this is not the whole of John's testimony. He has seen Christ as a Man marked out by the descent of the Spirit of God upon Him, and had this given to him as the sign by which he should know the One baptizing with the Holy Spirit. He sees and bears witness, therefore, that this is the Son of God.

The oil upon Aaron's head descends to the skirts of his clothing; and thus is accomplished that unity among brethren of which the Psalmist speaks (Ps. cxxxiii.) Now that the oil is the type of the Spirit, with which Christ as the true Aaron is anointed without blood, hardly needs demonstration (Ex. xxix. 7). Every thing combines to show that it was after John's baptism when the Spirit descended to abide on Christ, as the Baptist beheld it here, that this was fulfilled. (See Matt. iii., notes.) He had bowed in Jordan as the true offering in death for the sins of others, just as the Baptist proclaims Him now the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. He is declared, as the Spirit descends

thou shalt see the Spirit descending and abiding on him, he it is who *s*baptizeth with [the] Holy Spirit. And I have seen and borne witness that he is the *t*Son of God.

s Acts i. 5.
t vers. 14, 18, 49. *cf.* ch. 5. 18. *cf.* ch. 9. 35, etc. *cf.* ch. 20. 29, 31.

SUBDIVISION 3. (Chap. i. 35–42.)

A fore-shadow of a heavenly gathering.

AGAIN on the *u*morrow John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, *v*Behold the Lamb of God. And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. And Jesus, having turned, and beheld them following, saith unto them *w*What seek ye? And they said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Teacher,) where

u *cf.* ch. 20. 1 with 1 Jno. 2. 8. *cf.* Eph. 1. 22, 23.
v ver. 29. *cf.* Acts 13. 38, 39.
w *cf.* Matt. 20. 32.

upon Him, the Son of God; and that, as the apostle tells us (Heb. v. 5), is His call to the priesthood. The baptism of the Spirit is thus His priestly action, the anointing oil flowing down from the Head, which in the psalm produces the unity of brotherhood in Israel, and could not but as fully apply to that of a heavenly people, or to the Church; the Body of Christ is formed by the baptism of the Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 13); and though we could not have this as *yet* developed, for us it is the highest expression of spiritual unity, the fullest manifestation of the power of Christ's priestly work. It gives completeness to the Baptist's testimony to our Lord.

SUBD. 3.

"To Him shall the obedience of the peoples be" was Jacob's word of old as to Shiloh: a word which has waited long for its fulfilment. Of that generation of Israel to which He came He had to say, as foretold by the prophet: "I have labored in vain, and spent my strength for naught, and in vain; yet surely," He adds, "my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God" (Isa. xlix. 4). Jehovah answers Him accordingly, not only with the assurance that Jacob shall nevertheless be brought to God by Him, but also He shall be a light to the Gentiles, that He may be His salvation to the ends of the earth (ver. 6).

But the full reality of the work among the Gentiles was, even so, not given to the Old Testament to foresee. The mystery of the Church was yet "hid in God" (Eph. iii. 9), although the Old Testament had also its witnesses, which on account of their veiled and typical language could not be understood until it pleased Him to lift off that veil. There they serve now to show the place in His heart this supreme grace of His towards men ever had.

Even in the Gospels, with the exception of what is conveyed in the brief words to Peter which Matthew has recorded for us (xvi. 18), the Church still lies hidden. John, whose testimony to the Person of Christ is so full, and whose Gospel, from its unfolding of eternal life and the gift of the Spirit, so well deserves the title which has been given to it of the "Christian Gospel," yet says nothing explicitly of the Church of God. It is of the *family* of God he speaks throughout, even when it is the Church that furnishes his example of the family.

We have, however, something more than this in what we have now before us, though not in explicit statement. The Son of God, the Word made flesh, and stooping to be the Lamb of sacrifice, then and thus Baptizer with the Holy Spirit, and bringing men into a spiritual unity which is necessarily communion with the Father and the Son, begins in the power of the grace manifested in Him to draw men to Himself. He becomes the Centre of what we soon discern to be a two-fold gathering, in principle a heavenly and an earthly one. The mind of the Spirit is evidently to show us this by typical example, the Christian and the Jewish assemblies in their characteristic features as these,—the New Testa-

[x] abidest thou? He saith unto them, [y] Come and see. They went therefore, and saw where he abode, and they [z] abode with him that day; it was about the tenth hour. One of the two who heard John* [speak] and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first [a] findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias (which is, being interpreted, the Christ). He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looking

x *cf.* ch. 14. 2, 3. *cf.* Heb. 1. 3.
y ver. 46. ch. 4. 29. *cf.* Col. 3. 1.
z *cf.* ch. 17. 24. *cf.* 1 Thess. 4. 17.
a *cf.* ver. 45. *cf.* Mk. 5. 19. *cf.* Acts 1. 8.

*Or, "hearing from John."

ment and the Old finding in Him harmonious fulfilment. How suited is this, after His fulness has been displayed, to show us something of the circles of blessing that shall surround Him, to which eternally this fulness shall flow out. The exact, even minute correspondence forbids any mistake as to what is intended: every word tells. The more we examine the more shall we realize that here are all the details of a picture such as the Spirit of God alone could have drawn, and which is addressed to our intelligence as Christians to discover.

At the commencement John is still the witness, the Old Testament in him sending its disciples to Him who is the fulfilment of its sacrificial shadows, to the Lamb of God, who satisfies as such the first need of the soul, and in setting it free makes it inalienably His own. The true disciples of the Old Testament are, therefore, those who follow Jesus; and it was as a Jewish remnant that the Church began. But immediately we hear of something beyond this. Jesus sees them following and asks, "What seek ye?" and they seek, in fact, the place where He abides. It is practically the second occurrence of a word which is common in John and characteristic of his Gospel,—related, as it is to that divine side of things with which he has so much to do. Thus the Spirit "abides" on Christ: does not come occasionally, and leave again, as with the prophets of old. The Father also "abides" in Him (xiv. 10). The believer "abides" in Christ, and Christ in him; as the branch "abides" in the vine (xv.) and thus the vine —the sap—in the branch. The bread from heaven "abides" unto eternal life (vi. 27). But here the place where Christ abides carries our thoughts at once to His own "where I am," in the Father's house, where are the "abodes" (xiv. 2) in which His people are to be with Him for ever. We have in type the heavenly family, who even now by faith see where He abides and abide with Him while night is on the earth, to come out in the morning with Him. No name of earth attaches itself to this His dwelling-place; and though, plainly, as the time indicates, they pass the night with Him, no night is mentioned, for where He is it is day.

All harmonizes thus far; but we have more than this: for "one of the two who heard John speak and followed Him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. Andrew, the "manly," "courageous," is indeed akin to Simon, "the hearkener," the "obedient," who becomes Peter the "stone" the rock-like man; and both together may speak of the energy needed to go through the transition which the name of Peter at once suggests here, and which John further emphasizes for us by interpreting the Messias of Andrew's testimony into the Gentile "Christ." The sacred language itself is changing, as we see in that of the New Testament, which is the language of the outside world.

Andrew brings his brother to Jesus; and at once we have the change of name, which in Matthew takes place at a later time. There it is evidently a confirmation of what is given at the commencement of his discipleship; there the point had come from which the whole transformation could be seen, which here is confined to himself personally. The "hearkener, the son of the dove" (Jonas)* —for with the hearing the dead live (chap. v. 25), and this life is the Spirit's

*The weight of MS. authority is for "John," though they do not agree as to the spelling. The text in Matt. xvi. reads "Jonas" without dissent at all; which makes for the less supported reading here.

upon him said, Thou art [b]Simon the son of Jonas: thou shalt be called Cephas: which is, being interpreted, A stone.*

[b] *cf.* Matt. 16. 18. *cf.* Gen. 17. 5.

SUBDIVISION 4. (Chap. i. 43–51).

The earthly gathering.

ON the [c]morrow he was minded to go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip; and Jesus saith unto him, [d]Follow me. And Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip [e]findeth Nathanael, and said unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law wrote, and the prophets, Jesus the son of Joseph who is from Nazareth. And Nathanael said unto him, [f]Can anything good be out of Nazareth?

[c] *cf.* Mal. 4. 2. *cf.* 2 Sam. 23. 4.
[d] *cf.* Matt. 4. 19.
[e] ver. 41. *cf.* Mal. 3. 16.
[f] ch. 7. 41, 42, 52.

*Gk., "Peter."

work—becomes Cephas, which also is interpreted into the Gentile Peter: that is to say "a stone." Peter himself gives us the full significance of this (1 Pet. ii. 4, 5): "To whom coming, as unto a living Stone, . . . ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house." Thus the Church is formed; and in what is intimated in this name now conferred we see the heavenly company assuming the full character of the house of God, the dwelling-place of the Spirit. The other aspects of the Church as the body and bride of Christ are to be the subjects of after revelation.

Here then is the first gathering to the Lord as it is now, Israel having rejected Him, as in John we see all through. But even on this account John will not leave it there, and we are next to see, after the same representative manner, an Israelitish company, which serves by contrast only to make more distinct, if possible, the character of that which has preceded it.

SUBD. 4.

We have a new day, and the Lord meaning to go forth into Galilee, which we have seen elsewhere to be the typical place of blessing for Israel (see p. 69 *notes*) where her ruin is most manifest. And now, instead of a continuation of the former gathering by the testimony of disciples, there is a new beginning, and the work of the Lord Himself, who calls Philip. Now the disciples' work begins again: Philip calls Nathanael with a new testimony; "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets wrote, Jesus the son of Joseph, who is from Nazareth." The being the (titular) son of Joseph, which sounds strange as the voice of faith in John's Gospel, gives Him yet His apparent legal title to the throne. Exceptional in this Gospel it plainly is, but the King of Israel is manifestly intended to be now before us: in principle it is an Israelitish gathering that is begun. Nathanael shows also at first the Jewish unbelief: "Can anything good be out of Nazareth?" And yet the Lord testifies of him, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." Notice that it is as an "Israelite" he is presented to us. "Whence knowest thou me?" he asks in surprise. "Before Philip called thee," the Lord answers, "when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee." Doubtless there had been some special exercise of heart,—something in which he had been seeking God,—that Christ refers to. And with the true remnant of Israel in the last days, we know that the exercises through which they will pass will be as overshadowed by the fig-tree, which is the figure of a remnant of the nation returned to the land, but not returned to God (Luke xiii. 6–9), and who will receive Antichrist. The Psalms enter largely into these trials and sorrows; and in them God has provided for them beforehand that which will sustain their faith through that unequalled tribulation through which they will have to pass. In them, when they come to see Him face to face they will find how the Christ they have been seeking has been already with them.

Philip saith unto him, [g]Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming unto him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no [h]guile. Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the [i]fig-tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered him, Rabbi, thou art the [j]Son of God; thou art [k]King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see [l]greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [Henceforth]* ye shall see [m]heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

g *cf.* Nu. 10. 29. *cf.* Zech. 8. 21.
h *cf.* Ps. 32. 2. *ctr.* Is. 29. 13. *cf.* Zeph. 3. 13.
i *cf.* Lk. 13. 6-9. *cf.* Matt. 21. 19. *cf.* Neh. 9. 36, 37.
j ver. 34. ch. 6. 69.
k *cf.* ch. 12. 13. *cf.* ch. 19. 7, 8, 19.
l *cf.* Heb. 6. 5. *cf.* Lk. 22. 28, 29.
m Gen. 28. 12. *cf.* Hos. 2. 19-23. *cf.* Rev. 21. 23, 24.
n *cf.* ch. 1. 43. *cf.* Ezek. 37. 12. *cf.* Rom. 11. 15. *o cf.* Matt. 4. 15, 16 with Hos. 1. 9. *p* Lk. 1. 28; *cf.* Rom. 9. 5; Rev. 12. 1, 2.

SUBDIVISION 5. (Chap. ii. 1–12.)

The governmental order for the reception of the blessing.

AND the [n]third day there was a marriage in Cana of [o]Galilee; and the [p]mother of Jesus was there; and

*Some of the earliest MSS. and versions omit, with most editors.

Nathanael at once owns him, as the people will, and in the way in which (as we have seen in the other Gospels) He must be owned, to have blessing from Him: "Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel." As Son of God, they rejected Him in the high priest's court; as King of Israel, before Pilate. Here plainly Nathanael shows himself as representing the faith of the nation in the day to come; and in that character the Lord answers him: "Because I said, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Henceforth ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." If the "henceforth" here is to be accepted, then it would seem even plainer that the Lord anticipates the time when the nation converted to God will make their own the confession of this new disciple. From that time heaven will indeed be opened to them, and they will see the angels its inhabitants attendant upon One who will be manifestly "Son of man." This will be indeed a marvelous and blessed thing to see; and the title "Son of man," we have seen constantly connected by the Lord with His appearing in the clouds of heaven, with the glory of the angels. Doubtless it was also the title He loved to take during His life-time upon earth, as bringing near to those among whom He was the grace of His incarnation; but the whole connection as we have traced it, and the full meaning of the words themselves, seem to forbid more than a partial reference of them to the time of His earth-sojourn. Israel on the other hand will in millennial days undoubtedly stand under the glory of the heavens opened; but thus still be in a position short of theirs who will go in where He abides, and abide with Him. The two companies, the heavenly and the earthly, are thus in marked contrast, yet in connection with one another; and we see the Lord in His place as the Centre of each. How suited, we may again say, that after His manifestation in the fulness of His grace, as the evangelist has shown Him, we should see the effect of this in the two circles of blessing which now we see around Him, and which are but the types of those who shall fill heaven and earth and eternity with their joy and praise.

SUBD. 5.

The next scene that is presented to us is also in connection with this; and here we have Galilee once more, the third day, and a marriage, to which Jesus and His disciples are invited guests. In connection with Israel these things are

Jesus also was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when the [q]wine failed, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. And Jesus saith unto

q *cf.* Lam.5. 15. *cf.* Is.24.7,8. *cf.* Am.8.10.

suggestive symbols; and while we would in no wise make light of the natural significance, it will surely not do this to show, as others have done before, how the spiritual significance shines through it and adds lustre to every feature. Indeed this is no exceptional character of the scriptures we are now considering. We have been constantly realizing it in the Gospel histories and in those of the Old Testament, as well as in the types and shadows of the law. When we come to the doctrinal epistles this character of the inspired Word is no longer found: for the plain reason that the spiritual is no longer under the veil of the natural, but is openly revealed. In the book of Revelation we find it, however, taken up again, and in a more pronounced way than in any other part; and here the natural significance is for the most part *only* a veil, the hiding in parabolic enigmas not only of prophetic announcements as to the earth, but of the glories of eternity itself and of those precious realities which we long to know in their full blessedness. Happy he, then, who has best learned this language, which from our Lord's use of it we may call His favored speech, the apocalyptic tongue of heaven.

But let us look at the natural aspect first; in which yet we must not think it strange that the spiritual should come in, since that which is truly natural according to God can never be divorced from the spiritual: the Word, as we have just heard, is the Creator, and creation is therefore but the expression in nature of the spiritual—of the divine mind. With the disappearance of the spiritual, the very basis of the natural would necessarily disappear.

Here in the Lord's first miracle, we do right to expect in some way an introduction to His work in general on and in behalf of nature. For this is the character of all beginnings in the word and work of God. They are really of the nature of introductions to all that follows and which is developed out of them, as the seed incloses and outlines the future plant. Thus it is that the book of Genesis, and above all, the first part of it, gives the germ and outline of all Scripture. Here in the miracle at the marriage feast we shall surely find a "sign" of this kind: it is called a sign—something which has significance after the divine order.

"A marriage" carries us back at once to Eden, and to the divine word whereby it was instituted. "It is not good for man to be alone." He is made for communion, as the gift of language shows—to communicate and to receive communication. And in this, too, he realizes not merely the need of the creature, but is in the likeness of his Creator. In the very preface to his creation, the words, "Let us make man," speak of communion.

Man truly is made to recognize in it the dependence of a creature, to whom independence would be every way unsuited and unwholesome. If not mere misery, the pride through which an angel became a devil would be fostered by it, and God's will is to "hide pride from man." His whole mode of existence here is but one interconnected series of dependencies in which marriage is a central point. And here love finds its opportunity and displays itself in the sweet ministries of life, which reflect so much of the character of God and of His ways who is Love.

Marriage is central, therefore, in the web of human life, the basis of all relationships as God has instituted them. And as *marriage* (not mere sexual union) it has at most its mere shadow in the temporary attachments of the creatures below man. Personal obligation, voluntarily assumed, and expressed in constant fidelity, distinguishes it by the height of a whole heaven from these partial reflections of it.

We can understand, therefore, the importance of the sanction which the Lord gives by His presence at this marriage feast; and even why He takes at it the place He does, as Maker of all. It is every way harmonious; while the need

her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine [r]hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, [s]Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. Now there were six waterpots of stone set there, after the Jews' manner of [t]purifying, containing two or three firkins* apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with [u]water; and they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, [v]Draw out now, and bear unto the ruler of the feast: and they bare it. When the ruler of the feast tasted the water that had [w]become wine, and knew not whence it was (but the [x]servants who had drawn the water knew), the ruler of the feast calleth the bridegroom and saith unto him, Every man setteth on the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, that which is inferior; thou hast kept the [y]good wine until now. This beginning of signs did Jesus in Cana

*Or, "measures."

r ch. 7. 6, 8. ch. 8. 20. *cf.* Is. 63. 4.
s *cf.* Lk. 2. 51.
t *cf.* Mk. 7. 3, 4. *cf.* Heb. 9. 9, 10.
u *cf.* ch. 3. 5 with Eph. 5. 26. *cf.* Ps. 51. 16, 17.
v *cf.* Mal. 3. 3, 4. *cf.* 2 Cor. 3. 16.
w *cf.* Ps. 4. 7. *cf.* Ps. 65. 3. *cf.* Is. 54. 1. *cf.* Zeph. 3. 17.
x *cf.* Matt. 14. 19. *cf.* Am. 3. 7.
y *cf.* Is. 65. 17–19. *cf.* Is. 54. 4.

and limitations brought us by the fall are recognized also and provided for. The wine runs out: the joys of earth pass and cannot be renewed; alas, the empty forms of purification, like the six empty water-pots of stone, provide no basis upon which the blessing can come. Only the servants who draw the water know how, when at his bidding the pots are filled with water, this is changed into the new wine which is alone really "good"; and in which we recognize the memorial of His own deep sorrow, yea, of the blood outpoured for the guilt of man. And here Cana, "purchase," comes to its true significance, as the secret of the return of blessing of which Galilee reminds us. But we shall see all the details of what is here more fully brought out as we take up this story in its connection with the series of pictures in which the glory of Christ is being continuously displayed.

In this, which is the full application, Galilee will speak specifically of the return of blessing to *Israel*, Cana still showing us how the blessing is regained; and the "marriage" in such connection will take us back to the language of the Old Testament prophets, who figure in this way Israel's relation to Jehovah in time past, broken by her sin, but to be restored again in a more perfect and glorious way (see Hos. ii.), in what will be the resurrection time of the nation, of which, no doubt, the "third day" mentioned speaks (Hos. vi. 2). Here are the elements of what is now before us. Beside this, the "mother of Jesus" is here: who can only figure Israel, of whom Christ came, as concerning the flesh (Rom. ix. 5). And the disciples of Jesus coming with Him to the marriage point to those associated with Him in nearer intimacy and a higher order of blessing than the Jewish bride herself.

But a marriage still for Israel, raised as a nation from the dead, brings up of necessity the thought of her broken vows and the long delay of blessing. The feast, which should have been for her continuous, has failed, the wine has run out. The mother of Jesus, the nation in the flesh, aware in some sense of her condition, appeals to Him vaguely, as we see in this Gospel; would take Him by force even, and make Him a King (ch. vi. 15), from which He can only withdraw Himself. This is the "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" of the chapter here; His "hour," indeed, "is not yet come."

Why? when the need is apparent, and confessed? Ah, the need of *wine* is; but there is another need, deeper, yea, fundamental, which they do not confess, nor realize. Those six empty water-pots of stone, set there for purifying, but incapable now, symbolize the condition of hollow formalism. *Six* is the number of labor without rest, though capable of assuming another significance; but how long has this been the suited expression of a people away from God; the practi-

of Galilee, and manifested his [z]glory; and his disciples believed on him. After this he went down to [a]Capernaum, he and his mother and his brethren and his disciples; and there he abode not many days.

[z] ch. 1. 14.
[a] *cf.* Matt. 4. 13 with Matt. 9. 1.

SUBDIVISION 6. (Chap. ii. 13-22.)

The purging out of evil.

AND the Jews' [b]passover was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And he [c]found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money-changers sitting. And, having made a scourge of small cords, he cast all out of the temple, both sheep and oxen, and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables, and said unto those who sold doves, Take these things hence: make not my Father's house a house of [d]merchandise. And his disciples re-

[b] *cf.* ch. 5. 1. ch. 6. 4. ch. 12. 1.
[c] *cf.* Matt. 21. 12, 13. *cf.* Mal. 3. 2, 3.
[d] *cf.* Is. 56. 7. *cf.* Matt. 23. 14.

cal comment upon His words, "Mine hour is not yet come"! In this interval time is not reckoned, and not as yet have we seen the end of it.

But the time comes at last, and He must work to secure the blessing which without Him will never come. Now He says to the servants, "Fill the waterpots with water"; and they fill them to the brim. The number now may be that of discipline, which we know in fact God will use to bring them under the power of His word, which is His means of purification. "The washing of water" is "by the Word" (Eph. v. 26).

Thus self-judgment is accomplished: the Word received, the basis of blessing is established for the soul: faith is come, and the object of faith will soon be clearly seen. The water changes into the wine of joy, which is identified, as we have seen before, with the remembrance of Christ's precious sacrifice. It is very much the story of any sinner saved by grace; and it will be Israel's in the day at hand. Then indeed will the wine be the best wine; better than the lips have ever before tasted. The words of the master of the feast point the contrast with the world's joys which spoil the taste and then deteriorate. With this there is no intoxication, no perversion of taste, no evil, but only good. It can be said, "Drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved"; and of Judah (the worshiper), "He has washed his garments in wine, and his vesture in the blood of grapes; his eyes shall be red with wine." The fear of intemperance here is never before the soul.

The numerical structure here emphasizes the governmental order for the reception of blessing, and shows the reason of the long delay of it in the case of Israel. The conditions are the reception of the Word in faith, with the self-judgment which is repentance. And thus Christ becomes the Saviour of the lost, the one Object, for the heart that has known Him so. Thus He takes His throne among men.

SUBD. 6.

There follows, at Jerusalem, upon the occasion of the "*Jews'* passover," as John characteristically calls it, a first purging of the temple by Him, which He repeats, as we have seen in other Gospels, after His presentation to them openly as their King. It is given as one of the features of millennial blessing by the prophet Zechariah, that "there shall be no more a Canaanite"—or "trafficker"—"in the house of the Lord of hosts" (xiv. 21). The profanation of that which, till he finally leaves it, He always calls His Father's house stirs within Him the zeal for it which, as the psalmist is cited here as saying, consumed Him. How much did that house, God's dwelling-place among men, mean for Him whose great work was to establish it! In His own Person God had come down, and in such a way as implied no mere temporary visitation. His Name Emmanuel had told that out. Wisdom's delights were with the sons of men; yet with iniquity

membered that it is [e]written, The zeal of thy house eateth me up. The Jews therefore answered and said unto him, What [f]sign showest thou to us, that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, [g]Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. The Jews said therefore, [h]Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou raise it up in three days? But *he* spake of the [i]temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from among the dead, his disciples [j]remembered that he had said this; and they [k]believed the scripture, and the word that Jesus had said.

[e] Ps. 69. 9. *cf.* Ps. 119. 139.
[f] Matt.12.38. ch. 6. 30. *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 22.
[g] *cf.* Matt. 26. 61. *cf.*Matt.12. 40.
[h] *cf.* 1 Ki. 6. 38. *cf.*Matt.2.3.
[i] *cf.* ch.1.14. 1 Cor. 6.19.
[j] Lk. 24. 8. *cf.*ch. 12.16.
[k] *cf.*ch.20.9. *cf.*Ps.16.10.

He could not dwell. The precious blood shed for their sins could only make their persistence in them after this more hideous and more hateful. Thus the house must be purged in which God is to dwell; and the glory of God and the blessing of man required its purgation.

As Son of God, therefore, Christ casts out the defilement, taking openly a place of authority which none dare openly dispute. The shadow of future judgment falls upon them and scatters them. The Jews ask what sign He can show that the authority He claims belongs to Him. He answers them with a challenge to "destroy this temple and in three days He would raise it up"—referring to His death and resurrection: a parable which they could not interpret, and applied falsely to Herod's building, still unfinished; while even the disciples understood it only when it was fulfilled. The eyes of those held by externalism were not on Him; while as yet it held even those of true disciples. Thus the blow had to fall even upon the temple itself which left not even one stone upon another, and scattered its worshipers also far and wide over the earth; while the new temple of His humanity, glorified by the outbreaking of the glory that was within, becomes in heaven an open sanctuary, whence the divine Light shall irradiate the earth.

DIV. 2.

The second division of the Gospel comprises the larger portion of the book. In it we have as the thread upon which its precious truths are strung, eternal life as communicated to men, with its accompaniments and implications for the possessor of it, when now it is known in its abundant blessedness (ch. x. 10).

It is divided into four parts: in the first of which the life and all that accompanies it are seen as individual blessings simply, as in new birth, and the living water springing up within the soul; in the second, they are seen in relation to the scene around, as quickening out of a world lying under judgment, and the living waters pouring out for the refreshment of others. The third part is of a larger character, and has three different portions: (1) the soul is brought to God and is at liberty,—has the freedom of the house of God; (2) it belongs to the Shepherd's flock, outside the fold, and follows Him who saves and leads it into His abundant pastures; (3) it has life in resurrection-power, death abolished for it, and the Son of God glorified thereby. The fourth part, in the Lord's last discourse with His disciples, gives the furnishing for the way through a world out of which He is gone, but as expecting His return to receive us to Himself.

The relation of these things to one another, with the unity and harmony of their presentation in the Gospel, can only be considered as we take them up in detail.

SUBD. 1.

The first subdivision, then, speaks of eternal life and its accompaniments as individual blessing. This is naturally the first thing to be considered, before we look at the relationships into which we are brought by the reception of this divine gift. The beginning of all is new birth, which we have in the first section, made known to us by the Lord Himself in His words to Nicodemus. This

DIVISION 2. (Chaps. ii. 23–xvii.)

Eternal life as communicated and dependent.

SUBDIVISION 1. (Chaps. ii. 23–iv.)

As individual blessing.

SECTION 1. (Chaps. ii. 23–iii. 21.)

The beginning in new birth.

1 (ii.23-iii. 8): In the sovereign power of God: spirit from the Spirit.

1. NOW when he was in Jerusalem at the passover at the feast, [l]many believed on his name, beholding the [m]signs that he was doing. But Jesus did not [n]trust himself unto them, because he [o]knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

[l] *cf.* ch.4. 48. *cf.* ch. 6. 14, 36.
[m] *cf.* ch. 11. 45, 47. *cf.* Lk.16.30, 31.
[n] *cf.* ch.6.15. *cf.* Mk.1.43, 44.
[o] ch. 5. 42. *cf.* Matt. 9. 4. *cf.* ch. 6.70.

is a field much traversed and by the feet of many combatants; nor must we shun a conflict upon the issue of which, as will be evident, so much depends. We are here at one of those beginnings from which such different roads open that much will depend for us upon our not missing the right way.

The second section gives us the Baptist's final testimony, both in work and word; in which, in utter despair of man, he puts us into the hand of the Heavenly Guide, to be led on where he as of the earth cannot conduct us.

Upon which the third section carries us on, in the Lord's words to the Samaritan woman, to realize what life is in the Spirit; and here a Gentile scene opens, and fields are seen white to the harvest, while Israel rejects Him whom the faith of the Samaritans recognizes as the "Saviour of the world."

The fourth section, however, as an appendix to this, reminds us by a sign again wrought in Israel—nay, in Cana, the scene of the first miracle—that God has not cast away His people of old, and shows how in their distress they will seek to Christ at last, and find His grace still ready to receive them. Here the first subdivision manifestly closes.

Sec. 1.

1. Before we look at new birth itself, we must realize man's need of it; and this is shown us in the most striking way,—not in the case of those who openly refuse Christ, but on the contrary in that of those who accredit His claim. The miracles he did at Jerusalem at the passover wrought, we are told, conviction in many minds. "They believed in His name": the words used in the first chapter as to those to whom He gave authority to become children of God; yet here no such result follows, but the reverse. "Jesus did not commit Himself to them: because He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man; for He knew what was in man."

It was a natural work then, this conviction: sincere enough, but merely intellectual; the result of a reasoning process, leading to a correct conclusion, but with no vital change in the men themselves. They were convinced; they were not converted. Their judgment was formed upon evidence strong enough, but not derived from any glory they had seen in Him. It is not said therefore of these, as of those in the first chapter, that they "received Him." Christ had not gained admittance at the door of their hearts. It was still the light shining in darkness: He had still no beauty that they should desire Him. They had no imperative need, that should demand Him. Alas, here was in reality the deepest and most fundamental need, which nothing that was in man, or of man therefore could meet at all. Death could not produce life; and with the Lord's knowledge of what is in man, He can trust nothing that is from him. This need can only be met from a Source outside of man: he to whom Jesus can trust Himself can only be a man new born.

But there was a man of the Pharisees named [p] Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: this man came to him by [q] night and said unto him, Rabbi, we [r] know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be [s] born anew, he cannot [t] see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How

[p] ch. 7. 48-52. ch.19.39,40.
[q] *cf.* ch. 12. 42. *cf.* Lk.9.26.
[r] *cf.* ch.5.36. *cf.* ch.9. 29-33. *cf.*ch.12.37-40.
[s] ch. 1. 13. *cf.* ver. 36.
[t] *cf.* 1 John 3. 2; *cf.* Matt. 5. 8.

This brings us to Nicodemus and the Lord's teaching as to new birth. The circumstances are to be noted under which he comes, with a caution which shows his apprehension of the danger for himself, and which shows therefore his earnestness in coming. His history afterwards, as the evangelist gives us the means of tracing it, confirms both these things as true of him. In the cleansing of the temple the first note had sounded of a conflict whose end (from any human point of view) it was not hard to foresee. The chiefs of the priesthood were implicated in that desecration of the house of God which the young prophet of Galilee had so denounced and broken in upon: a man who had risen up unsanctioned by the leaders of the people, of whom Nicodemus himself was one. Yet at such a juncture he risks reputation and abases his Pharisaic pride to come as an enquirer to the despised Nazarene.

He comes with the distinct acknowledgment that He is a teacher come from God; and that on the same warrant of the signs wrought by Him, which those before had grounded their faith upon,—a faith which He had discredited and set aside. But there was a hunger in the heart of Nicodemus which was not in theirs, and which brought him to the feet of Jesus; and none were ever rejected there. Yet the Lord meets him with an abruptness and peremptoriness which we do not expect from the grace which characterized Him. Putting side by side with this His manner with the Samaritan woman afterwards, it is striking to see the difference. To her was the assurance of God's readiness to give (if she but asked Him for it) living water; the token of a love she had not known nor sought to know. To him the conditions, strange and impracticable as we know they seemed, upon which alone one could see the Kingdom of God: a shut door, as it might seem, in the face of the real seeker; while she who sought not was to be wooed and won for Him. And this was, no doubt, one reason for the difference; and which makes for Nicodemus, instead of against him. Won he was: his heart drawn, and ready to receive the truth as made known to him, even to face the unwelcome, if it were but truth; and the Lord treats him accordingly.

But there is another side to it in the fact of the Pharisaism that yet cleaves to him, and which knows nothing of the lost condition of man as man. Yet to this he must be brought, stripped of every remnant of his own righteousness, and clothed even with the spotted robe of shame in which she at the well listened in wonder to hear of what God could be, even for her. Grace itself, with Nicodemus, must humble before it can exalt, must teach the worthlessness of man that all God's glory may shine out for him. The Pharisee must renounce his many years' laboriously built up claim on God, and go back behind infancy itself, to a nothingness which would be shelter to his dishonor if it were only that, there to lie down helpless at the mere pleasure of God to save or to destroy! "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the Kingdom of God;" and who then by his own will was born at the first? So is man born again: "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

The Kingdom of God was that which the prophets had announced, and for which all Israel waited. We must not think of it in the form it has now taken, the King away, and its administration in the hands of men. We must think of it as established by power at the coming of the Lord, when for Israel a remnant alone will enter it, whose character Isaiah explicitly declares (chap. iv. 2–4).

can a man be born when he is [u]old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except one be born of [v]water and the [w]Spirit, he cannot [x]enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the

u cf. Jer. 13. 23.
v cf. Ezek. 36. 25–27. *cf.* Eph. 5. 26. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 23.
w cf. Tit. 3. 5; *cf.* Gen. 1. 2. *x cf.* Rev. 21. 27; *cf.* Rev. 22. 14, 15.

For "in that day shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy: even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughter of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning." Then follows the account of the glory of Jerusalem in millennial days.

It is certain therefore that, when Israel enters the Kingdom, every one will be born again that does so; and it should be clear that this is what a Jew like Nicodemus would expect, and had right to expect, if taught of the prophets. Of the Christian form of the Kingdom he could know nothing, and could be expected to know nothing; for it was not yet revealed. Nor could the Lord's words even apply to the present time, in which all the parables declare a mingled condition of things, tares and wheat together, wise and foolish virgins. On the other hand, *for us*, in the perfected form of it, it will, of course, apply in the fullest way; but of all this Nicodemus could as yet know nothing: so that the Lord's expression of wonder, "Art thou the teacher of Israel and knowest not these things?" forbids all *direct* reference in this way, and the passage in Ezekiel (xxxvi.) from which He takes the words that presently follow are a positive prediction of Israel's entering the Kingdom in this manner.

This, if true, has an important bearing upon the meaning of new birth which we shall presently consider. The principle of man's need of it for blessing at any time remains, of course, unaffected. Man is man, naturally the same all through his history; and "as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." God also remains the same, and the need of renewal, therefore, to be with Him.

Nicodemus is confounded at the thought of such a change as the Lord speaks of. It is not simply the application to Israel over which he stumbles, though this would be, of course, an additional mystery; but as to the thing in itself, how can it be possible? he asks: "How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" That is naturally impossible; but he has no explanation of it: what spiritual change can there be, so complete, so radical, so entirely beyond man to accomplish, as would be implied in a new *birth?*

The Lord reaffirms what he has said in the same solemn and emphatic manner; but now with explanations which go to the heart of the matter: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God." Then He states the need of it: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born anew."

In considering this it is natural to think first of the need, before we consider how God's grace has met it. It is evident that when the Lord is declaring the need of man's being born again, the words that declare it must have in view what man is as fallen. Thus, if with Müller and Weiss we interpreted "that which is born of the flesh is flesh" as meaning that "the corporeal birth produces only the corporeal sensuous part," one would suppose this to be as true if man had never fallen; that is, supposing that man naturally has nothing but this; and what follows would affirm, as in contrast with the sensuous part, that the spirit of man was a product of new birth; or else "that which is born of the Spirit" would refer to creation and not to new creation.

flesh is *y* flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is *z* spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, *Ye* must be born anew. The *a* wind bloweth where it listeth; and

y cf. Gen. 5. 3. *cf.* Rom. 8. 5-8. ch. 6. 63.

z cf. 1 John 3. 9; *cf.* Eph. 4. 22-24. *a cf* Ezek. 37. 9, 10; *cf.* Jas. 1. 18.

But we may confidently maintain, on the one hand that new birth *is* spoken of—that it is the Lord's subject here; and also that man every where has spirit, as well as soul and body,—that is, the sensuous part. Nay, spirit is in man the very seat of personality, as of all human knowledge (1 Cor. ii. 11), and that by which naturally men are the "offspring of God" (Acts xvii. 28), as the "Father of *spirits*" (Heb. xii. 9). New birth does not create a personality, or make a man out of a mere bestial creature.

If, then, "that which is born of the Spirit" speaks, as it certainly does, of the product of new birth, "that which is born of the flesh" covers all that man is naturally; and that he thus is only "flesh" is the effect of the fall. "Flesh" is not a new element of personality: it is strictly and evidently a degradation of it, a fallen condition. Spirit and soul are in men still, and yet these are but "flesh" after all: sunk into it, penetrated by it, so that in this way it has come to have a "mind," a "will," independent and away from God, "lusts" therefore (chap. i. 13; Rom. viii. 6, 7) of a heart unsatisfied. God and the unseen having ceased to be a reality for the soul, or at most having become a dread reality, the visible, the tangible, the sensible, possess and control it. Man is therefore flesh and only flesh.

In looking at the other side of what is here, the new birth of the Spirit, we have to remember what the trespass-offering teaches us, that God in restoring never *merely* restores. He does not reconstitute humanity as it was in Adam, but brings in Christ and makes Him the type of a new humanity, another order of manhood. This is according to a definite law of progress which runs through creation, and to which new creation conforms. According to this at each step in advance we find not the higher developing out of the lower: the plant out of the mineral, the animal out of the vegetable, man out of the animal; but a higher principle brought in and made by stooping to it to raise the lower. Thus life does not develop out of the inanimate, the crystal is not the budding of an organization, though it may be a prophecy of it. That life is only *from* life is admitted by men of science generally as far as observation and experiment can determine. Life then is a new principle which by union with it raises up the inorganic. In the animal again, the soul is not developed out of the life principle, but unites with and raises it up similarly to a higher level. In man spirit unites itself to soul. After the failure of man we may expect a new development after the same manner, by the union of a higher with a lower nature, and thus the formation of a "new man."

Of the "last Adam," however, we do not hear as yet, although we shall before the Gospel is concluded. At present we have only the new birth itself and its product a "spirit" nature. "Except one be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

Water and Spirit combine to effect this wondrous transformation. What are these two that can thus unite for such a purpose? "Of all ancient writers," says Hooker, "there is not one to be named who ever expounded the text otherwise than as implying external baptism." Among moderns also this is by far the most common view; although some would take water as simply a symbol of purification. Those who make it baptism apply it mostly to Christian baptism, but some to John's and some to proselyte baptism. The "washing (or bath) of regeneration" (Tit. iii. 5) and the two baptisms of water and the Spirit are naturally taken to support this view. But the baptism of the Spirit is not in order to new birth, as the Lord's words after His resurrection clearly prove. He says to the disciples: "For John verily baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence" (Acts i. 5). But certainly it was

> thou hearest the voice thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

not at Pentecost, to which the Lord's words refer, that they were born again; and as certainly, therefore, *when* they were born again, they had not received this baptism. Thus, plausible as it may look at first, water and the Spirit cannot be united in this way.

But moreover Christian baptism was not as yet instituted, and the Lord could have expressed no astonishment at a Jewish teacher like Nicodemus being ignorant of such value attaching to it as would be thus expressed in the words we are considering. As for John's baptism, his own words are against any thought of this. His "I baptize with *water*" not only *contrasts* his baptism with that of the Spirit, but deprecates the very thought of water as capable of having so great significance.

As a symbol of purification we come nearer to the truth of it; but here the apostle helps us further with his statement that "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water *by the Word*" (Eph. v. 25–26), and Peter adds that we are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. . . . And this is the word," he goes on, "which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet. i. 23–25). Thus it is by the word of the gospel, and not by the word that sanctifies baptismal water, as some have dreamed, that this wondrous change is effected. And if we have difficulty in understanding how the Spirit should unite with the water of baptism to accomplish a spiritual work for which water is plainly incompetent, it is on the other just as easy to see that the Spirit does unite with the Word for this purpose. "For our gospel came unto you," says the apostle to the Thessalonians, "not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance" (1 Thess. i. 5). Thus, by the Spirit and the Word, comes in new birth.

The apostle John under the figure of "*living* water" speaks of the Spirit in the believer (vii. 37–39). We can understand it clearly by this united action of the Spirit and the Word. If Christ by the Word purifies His church, the Spirit is necessary to make the Word effectual. As has been said by another, the Word without the Spirit is merely rationalism; the Spirit without the Word—the claim of that—would be fanaticism. Water is the Word; the Spirit with the Word the "living water." In the Lord's words to Nicodemus we have the bringing of the two together; and then, as "that which is born of the flesh is flesh," so "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. A fleshly nature is the product of the natural birth; a spiritual nature is the product of the new. It is only the Spirit that is spoken of here; but elsewhere we are reminded that "his seed"—the incorruptible seed, of which Peter speaks,—"abideth in" the one born again (1 John iii. 9); and James in another but similar figure speaks of the "*engrafted* word" (i. 21), by which, as the word of truth also, God has begotten us (ver. 18).

All this speaks but one language. We see that in the children of God there is implanted a nature in moral likeness to God,—in this sense, a divine nature. The full doctrine of it will develop as we go on: the co-existence of the flesh with it in the believer, the meaning of this, the hindrance resulting, the power over it, all this we shall have to look at elsewhere. So much is clear, that the believer is a true child of God as begotten of Him, and recipient of His nature: and this is what new birth implies.

The words "water" and "spirit" are, no doubt, from Ezekiel xxxvi. 25, 26, which describes the divine preparation of Israel for the Kingdom; but the Lord makes them stronger than the prophet, who does not use the expression "born again." "A new spirit" also is not the same as "spirit" from the Spirit. Yet the prophet's words should have made a teacher of Israel recognize the import of the Lord's words in relation to that change, so complete and so essen-

2 (iii. 9-18): Accompanying salvation through the Cross.

2. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou the teacher of Israel, and [b]knowest not these things? Verily, verily I say unto thee, [c]We speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen, and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you [d]earthly things and ye believe not, how will ye believe when I tell you of [e]heavenly things? And no one hath [f]ascended into heaven, but he who [g]came down from heaven, the Son of man who [h]is in heaven.

[b] *cf.* Ps. 51. 2, 5, 6, 10. ver. 7. [c] ver. 32. *cf.* ch. 5. 31-38. [d] ver. 5. *cf.* Is. 60. 21. [e] *cf.* ch. 6. 53-58. *cf.* ch. 20. 17. [f] *cf.* Prov. 30. 4. *cf.* ch. 1. 18. [g] ch. 6. 38, 42, 58. ch. 16. 28. [h] *cf.* 1 Ki. 8. 27; *cf.* Is. 57. 15.

tial, which the people must undergo in order to enter upon the long desired inheritance.

For us also the parabolic mode of speech employed should be no difficulty, constantly as He uses it to convey spiritual truth. The exercise needed for its apprehension He never seems to desire to avoid; for by it that apprehension is made more real, full and heartfelt. As spoken to a Jewish teacher, the words are perfectly natural; as his ignorance of their meaning shows his want of understanding of Israel's true condition and his own. Marvel it was indeed to her teachers that the people of God should need to be born again; but that need, so real and great, could only be met by the power of the unseen Spirit working in a way uncontrollable, as invisible to man, however plain the effects of it. It was the sovereign grace of God, therefore, which worked and must work, free as the wind, and if grace to Israel, could not be confined to Israel: we all have the same need, and are debtors to it alike.

2. But we have another need, and as imperative, which the Lord goes on to put beside the former. If men must be born again, the Son of man too must be lifted up that they may have eternal life. Death must minister to us as well as life: that which was against us must be put on our side; and then the full reality of His gift will be manifested,—not merely life, but eternal life.

Nicodemus can only express his bewilderment: "How can these things be?" he asks. The Lord asks in turn how he can be the teacher of Israel, and yet not know them. Then He affirms His own knowledge, from which He speaks, not with the uncertainty of their traditional teachers. Yet Israel received not His witness, even when He spoke of things upon earth, where what He said could in many ways be tested. New birth was a thing in this way sufficiently within their knowledge: for the work of the Spirit in men had a voice if they could hear it, and the prophets also had borne witness to it. Now if still they believed not, how would they believe if He spoke of heavenly things? of a sphere as to which they would have no witness but His own? For it was plain that there was no one—He is speaking of accessible witness only, as is manifest, not of Enoch or Elijah or the spirits of the dead—no one who had ascended up to heaven, to give any confirmation. His own witness must stand alone. He, the Son of man, had been in heaven; from heaven He had come down; still, by the mystery of His nature, the One who is in heaven. The divine-human Person comes out distinctly here, the One always in heaven, though a man on earth: of no created being could such a thing be said. And here at once comes in the witness of heavenly things; which, alas, Israel would reject, as we know they rejected Him who bore the witness, and of whom the witness was.

But that rejection itself was controlled of God to work out His purpose, and to this immediately therefore the Lord now goes on: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so also must the Son of man be lifted up, that every one who believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Here the Cross is spoken of in its full character, as it clearly would be where the divine purpose is in view as here. Men indeed might lift up the Son of man (chap. viii. 28); and man's sinful act could not work out the righteousness of

And as [i]Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be [j]lifted up, that every one who believeth on him should [not perish, but]* have eternal life. For God so [k]loved the [l]world that he [m]gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever [n]believeth on him should [o]not perish, but have [p]eternal

*Some omit.

i *cf.* Nu. 21. 4-9.
j ch. 8. 28. ch.12.32-34. *cf.*Gal.3.13.
k 1 Jno. 4.9, 10. *cf.* Tit. 3.4-7.
l *cf.*ch.12.46, 47. *cf.* Rom. 5.

6-8. *m cf.* Gen. 22. 2; *cf.* 1 Jno 4. 14; *cf.* Rom. 8. 32. *n* ver. 36; ch. 5. 24. *o cf.* ch. 10. 28. *ctr.* 2 Thess. 1. 9. *p* ch. 6. 47, 54; ch. 17. 3; *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 11-13.

God; but that lifting up in the divine ordering was to be for us the token of wrath endured, of curse taken and removed: for "cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree." (See Deut. *notes*, p. 585). This answers, according to the type which the Lord brings forward, to the lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness, which healed, by looking to it simply, the serpent's bite. And Christ being made a curse for us, by faith in Him the power of sin in us is overcome, the poison of the serpent is done away for us. "In the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin"—a sin-offering—He has put away sin for us in that which condemns it in us: we are justified, and set upon God's side as to it. The Cross is salvation for us in this double character, as penalty owned, and penalty removed; which in result turns our eyes away from ourselves to Him who is henceforth to fill them.

The penalty borne for the believer, there can be for him no perdition. The application of the brazen serpent here seems fully to confirm the reading "shall not perish," omitted though it be by some of the earliest MSS. The having eternal life goes beyond the simple removal of death, and beyond the type, while it gives us the connection with the Lord's theme with Nicodemus. For, if "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," the possession of the divine nature implies of necessity eternal life. That which is divine is that which is truly "eternal:" not simply unending when begun, but which had *no beginning*, and thus can have no end. The sacrificial work of Christ is here affirmed as the basis of this priceless gift to men, which in the moment of faith becomes assured to him who has this.

For this the Son of *man* must be lifted up: atonement must be made, and made by One in the nature of him who sinned; thus capable as man of taking the penalty upon man, and affirming the righteousness of God in it as bowing to it. Righteousness, the first necessity, is therefore met: the righteousness of God is put upon the side of the sinner who believes, as the apostle Paul will show us elsewhere. The ground of blessing is laid for all who will accept it.

But that is the human side; and God, if that be all, is the recipient only. His righteousness is declared, true; but that is not an adequate manifestation of Himself, and God is fully manifested in the gospel. Hence the Lord goes on to that most precious, most familiar statement of it in the Bible: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Here we are at the heart of the matter. We have not now the conditions emphasized upon which divine mercy can come to us, though still it remains true that such conditions there are and must be, if God abide faithful to His own nature, as He must. But here we have the moving cause of our salvation, the activity of that nature: "God loved," for "God is love." Then He loved whom? the Jew? the better class among men? those that love Him? No: but the "world," and not even "the world of the elect," as some would put it, but (as what follows should make plain) the world at large, the great world of His creatures, though now estranged from Him. Loved them, then, how much? how can we find measure for this love of His? Here is the measure of it: He "*so* loved the world that He gave His Only-begotten Son; that every one who believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Divine love has thus sought men with an earnestness and seriousness which

life. For God sent not his Son into the world to [q]judge the world; but that the world through him might be [r]saved. He that [s]believeth on him is not judged; he that believeth not is judged [t]already, [u]because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God.

3 (19-21): Manifestation by the light.

3. And this is the judgment, that the [v]light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light, [w]because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil [x]hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, that his [y]deeds may not be discovered;* but he that practiseth the truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be [z]manifested that they are wrought in God.

*Or, "reproved."

18. 7. *y cf.* ch. 7. 7; *cf.* Eph. 5. 11-13; *cf.* Heb. 4. 12, 13. *z cf.* 1 Jno. 1. 5-7; *cf.* 2 Cor. 1. 12; *cf.* Ps. 139. 23, 24.

q cf. Lk. 9. 56. *cf.* ch. 5. 45. ch. 12. 47.
r 1 Tim. 1. 15. Lk. 19. 10.
s ch. 6. 40. *cf.* Rom. 8. 1.
t ver. 36. *cf.* 2 Cor. 2. 15, 16.
u ch. 8. 24. ch. 16. 8, 9.
v ch. 1. 4, 5, 9. ch. 8. 12. ch. 12. 35, 36, 46.
w cf. Rom. 13. 12, 13.
x cf. Prov. 15. 12. *cf.* 2 Chron.

can only be questioned by questioning the true dignity of Him who has come so far on God's part, to give us the assurance of it. And to Him all the ages witness, who is Himself above them all, the unique phenomenon in human history, of all God's miracles the crowning one.

But if God's love has come out in such a manner, the rejection of it is as fatal as the acceptance is fraught with blessing. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" "He that believeth not is judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the Only-begotten Son of God." But not for judgment, but for salvation, did God send His Son. That the Redeemer will in fact be the Judge of men (chap. v. 22, 23, 27) is something very different from this, nay, opposite to it.

3. But light is come into the world, and the light makes everything manifest. Here is the judgment, that men do not desire manifestation when their deeds are evil, but love the darkness which conceals them. By turning from the light, they show that they know where the light is—that it bears witness to the conscience, although they are not in it so as to get the good of it. The practiser of truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest as being wrought in God.

Here, for the present, Nicodemus and the Lord part. The Pharisee is yet hindered by his Pharisaism, and these parting words seem words for his conscience, governed as he is so much by the people among whom he is. His name bears the same equivocal stamp with his character as yet. It may be "victory of the people" or "one who conquers the people:" which it will be with him is yet in the balance. But in a darker night than the present he is to come forth at last as conqueror, not conquered. His soul will have passed out of the shadow, just when the light might seem to have failed it. For him, as for many, "it shall come to pass that at eventime it shall be light."*

Sec. 2.

We have now the final testimony of John to Christ, with the contrast, drawn by John himself, between them. He, though a "burning and a shining light," as the Lord declares, is earthy, and must pale before the orb of day. But there is no sorrow to him in this: the friend of the Bridegroom only "rejoices greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice," and his testimony at the close rings out in such a manner that many take the latter part of it to be that of the Evangelist rather than the Baptist. But this does not seem, at least, to be marked out for us in any decisive way, and our own thoughts as to what might or might not

*The similarity and the contrast between Nicodemus and Nicolaos, from whom come the Nicolaitans of Revelation (chap. ii.) is to be noted. The Nicolaitans are conquerors of the people (of *God*); Nicodemus, of the *populace*. God has a *laos*, but not a *demos*.

SECTION 2. (Chap. iii. 22-36.)

John's final testimony: the contrast between himself and Christ.

AFTER these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them and baptized. And [a]John also was baptizing in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water there; and they came and were baptized. For John was not yet cast into [b]prison. There arose then a reasoning of the disciples of John with a Jew about [c]purifying. And they came to John and said unto him, Rabbi, he who was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, *he* baptizeth, and [d]all are coming to him. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it hath been [e]given to him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said I am [f]not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the [g]bridegroom; but the [h]friend of the bridegroom, who standeth and heareth him, joys with rejoicing because of the bridegroom's voice. This

a Matt. 3. 5, 6.
b Matt. 14. 3-12.
c *cf.* Matt. 15. 1, 2, etc. *cf.* ch. 2. 6.
d ch. 4. 1-3. *cf.* Lk. 14. 25, 26.
e *cf.* 1 Cor. 3. 5-7.
f ch. 1. 20-27.
g Matt. 9. 15. Matt. 22. 2. *cf.* Ps. 45. 1, 9, 14.
h *cf.* Matt. 11. 10, 11. *cf.* Song. 5. 1.

transcend the intelligence of one in his position do not seem a sufficient authorization.

We find at the beginning here Jesus with his disciples in the country of Judea, and baptizing,—although we are presently assured that personally the Lord did not baptize, but His disciples only (chap. iv. 2). We have nowhere else an account of such baptizing, which we naturally conclude to have been of a similar character to that of John, which is immediately mentioned. It is a confirming witness of the truth that John was proclaiming, as we may gather also from Mark (i. 15). Baptism is in the New Testament always to death; Christian baptism to Christ's death (Rom. vi. 3); and to take one's place in death is a profession of repentance. Death is the sentence from God under which man has come through sin, and thus those baptized by John confessed in it the sins which had brought them there (Matt. iii. 6). In such a position they awaited the forgiveness which He who was coming after John would bestow. Now He had come, and His own proper ministry began, as is clear, beyond John's baptism. Yet He could through His disciples confirm the truth of this, while taking care to keep His own place apart.

John also continued baptizing, keeping his place as forerunner, and was now in Ænon, "abounding in springs," *near to* Salim, or Shalem, "peace." The names are as significant in this case as in all other in the word of God. Question arose here, we are told, between John's disciples and a Jew, about purifying. Of the nature of this, and of how little answer there might be, we may judge from the Lord's words with Nicodemus; and the want of settlement of such a question would be likely to bring up the further one of the new Teacher who had appeared; and the disciples come to John thereupon, with the announcement that He to whom he had borne witness was now Himself baptizing, and men were flocking to Him.

John had, in fact, raised questions which he could not settle: we may say that it was of the very essence of his mission, that it should be so. Jesus alone was to satisfy the expectations that had been aroused by John; and in him the spirit of the past ages found embodiment, pointing on beyond themselves. John, therefore, takes occasion by all this that has arisen to speak once more and decisively of his own relationship to Christ.

A man can receive nothing, he says, except what has been given him from heaven. For one satisfied with the will of God there is abiding contentment: for, let things go as they may, God still rules all. How blessed to realize that

my joy then is fulfilled. *He* must [i]increase, but I must decrease. He who cometh from above is [j]above all: he that is of the earth is earthly and [k]speaketh [as] of the earth; he who cometh from heaven is above all. And what he hath [l]seen and heard, this he testifieth, and no one [m]receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that [n]God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God* is not giving the Spirit by [o]measure. The Father [p]loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that [q]believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that is not subject† to the Son shall not see life, but the [r]wrath of God abideth upon him.

i *cf.* 2 Cor. 12. 5–10. *cf.* Gal. 2. 20.
j *cf.* ch. 1. 34. *cf.* Matt. 3. 14. *cf.* Rom. 9. 5.
k *cf.* ver. 12. *cf.* Mk. 1. 4.
l ver. 11. *cf.* ch. 1. 18. *cf.* ch. 8. 38.
m ch. 1. 11. ch. 8. 45.
n *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 9, 10. *cf.* Rom. 3. 4.
o *cf.* Col. 2. 9. *cf.* ch. 14. 8, 9. *cf.* Tit. 3. 5, 6.
p *cf.* ch. 5. 20–23.

* Many read, "He," but the meaning is the same.
† Or, "believeth not." The thought seems to be *heart* subjection.
cf. Gen. 24. 36. q vers. 15, 16; ch. 20. 31. r ver. 18; 1 Jno. 5. 12; *cf.* Eph. 2. 3.

which keeps the heart at peace unfailingly—bids one be still and know than He is God.

He had said he was not the Christ, but His fore-runner; and in the crowds that were flocking to the new Teacher he but saw that the bride was for the Bridegroom, not for himself, who was but the Bridegroom's friend. Did they grieve for him? he joyed with rejoicing—joyed exceedingly, in the Bridegroom's voice; though it meant for himself necessarily decrease, with the increase of that Other.

Was He not necessarily supreme? He who had come from heaven, and bare witness thus of heavenly things with direct personal knowledge of them, such as none that were of the earth could have. Value Him at His worth, what were these crowds that were coming to Him? It seemed, in fact, as if none were receiving His testimony. But those who did so, found therein the truth of God as to all His promises and in all His ways: he could set to his seal that God is true. For God was giving, through Him whom He had sent, free utterance to His own heart. In contrast with the fragmentary communications of former times, He was not now giving His Spirit by measure. Nay, here was the Son Himself, the Beloved of the Father, with all things given by this love into His hand: His words, therefore, are the full heart of God made known.

Faith in Him is, then, the one necessity: he that believeth on Him has eternal life; but he that is not subject to the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides upon him. Eternal life or no life; eternal life or wrath abiding: these then are the alternatives.

Thus John sends his disciples to Jesus.

Sec. 3.

We have now to follow the Lord outside of Judea and even of Galilee, to find more receptive hearts in Samaria than in either of these, and His own heart freer than yet in Israel. A significant time it is, and all the more for its exceptional character, even in John's Gospel. Samaria, spite of the claim put forth to "our father Jacob," is really Gentile, though with a tinge of Israelitish blood which was worse than valueless, the fruit of mixed marriages forbidden and abhorred. The woman wonders that a Jew should ask but a drink of water from a Samaritan. Yet the spirit of the Lord, escaping from the oppressive self-righteousness of Jewish Pharisaism, finds room to expand in hostile Samaria; and here it is that He is fed with more than common food, and has before Him a view of whitening harvest-fields which we do not hear of elsewhere.

This connects clearly with the Lord's theme with the woman of Sychar, of living water springing up within the soul, which the evangelist, as we have seen, interprets elsewhere of the Spirit to be received in a new way after Jesus

SECTION 3. (Chap. iv. 1–42.)
Life in the Spirit.

1 (1-26): Abiding sufficiency in the soul.
1 (1-15): from God's gift.

1. [1] WHEN therefore the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing [s]more disciples than John, (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) he left Judea and [t]departed again to Galilee. And he must [u]needs pass through Samaria. He cometh therefore to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near to the piece of land that [v]Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's spring was there. Jesus therefore, being [w]wearied with his journey, sat thus at the spring. It was about the sixth hour. There cometh a

s ch.3.22-26.
t ch. 1. 43. cf. Matt. 4. 12.
u cf. Matt. 15. 21, etc. cf.Lk.19.10.
v cf.Gen.33. 19. cf. Gen. 48. 22. ver. 12.
w cf. Matt. 4. 2. cf. Matt. 8. 24. cf.Matt.21. 18. cf.Heb.4.15.

should be glorified (chap. vii. 38, 39). Thus we are, in fact, on a line of truth characteristically Christian and Gentile; the Lord looking forward, as is plain, and speaking in the parabolic manner usual with Him in such connection; and yet so as to convey as much as could be conveyed of the blessing with which His heart overflows—of that *abundant* life which He is come to communicate (x. 10).

1. [1] The Lord Himself calls and prepares the messenger by whom He is going to reach the men of Sychar. Such a messenger He chooses! But it is not exceptional with Him to take up the beggar from the dunghill, so that, as we know, the publicans and sinners followed Him habitually. But here was one not following, but sought out,—a weary and jaded, not conscience-stricken sinner, whose wakening into life is a story which has wakened how many others! May God in His goodness tell it out once more, so that it may still be fresh in repetition, and some like her be attracted by it yet.

How suited that it is in His withdrawal for awhile from the self-righteous legalism of the Pharisees that the Lord comes into Samaria, to sow a new field with the Word of life! He withdraws even, as it would seem, from that baptism of disciples in which He has been rather accrediting John's testimony than giving voice to His own. John's voice was now hushed in prison, and his rejection had broken up that partial reestablishment of divine relationship with the people at large which the multitudes flocking around him might seem to have effected. It was gone, that dream of pious hearts in Israel: the shepherd was smitten and the sheep were scattered. And though the Chief Shepherd still remained, the open gathering was for the time given up, save of immediate followers needed for the maintenance and carrying on of the divine testimony, until it could be resumed on other ground.

With His back thus turned for the time upon Jerusalem, and His face turned toward Galilee, the place connected, typically at least, with Israel's restoration in the latter days, the two days' testimony in Samaria comes into its place morally, as a picture of the present interval of divine grace to the Gentiles. We shall find, in fact, when we come to the healing of the nobleman's son in Capernaum, that we have in this a real foreshadow of Israel's restoration when this interval is at an end. All is therefore in complete harmony.

We find, therefore, the Lord now at Sychar ("purchased") which took its name from the piece of land purchased by Jacob from the sons of Hamor, and given to Joseph, who was buried there. All that Jacob had purchased, therefore, (though he meant it otherwise,) and all that he could give to his best-loved son, was the place of a grave: a good place in which to speak of another gift and another purchase, free to all who desired and sought it, a spring of life instead of a place of death, and of which Jacob's spring could be at once the type, and (what all types must be) the instructive contrast also. To this spring, which as we learn directly was not free-flowing but shut up in a well, the Lord came, a wearied man, and sat Him down there.

woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus saith unto her, [x]Give me to drink. For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy provisions. The Samaritan woman therefore saith unto him, How dost thou, being a Jew, ask drink of me, who am a Samaritan woman? For the [y]Jews have no dealings with the [z]Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the [a]gift of God, and [b]who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee [c]living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: whence then hast thou the living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself, and his sons, and his cattle? Jesus answered and saith unto her, Every one who drinketh of this water shall [d]thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall thirst [e]no more for ever; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a [f]spring of water, springing up unto eternal life.

x *cf.* Gen. 24. 14. *cf.* Lk. 15. 5 with vers. 32-34.
y *cf.* Ezr. 4. 3, 10. *cf.* Neh. 9. 2.
z *cf.* 2 Ki. 17. 24-41. *cf.* ch. 8. 48. *cf.* Lk. 17. 15-17.
a *cf.* Rom. 6. 23.
b *cf.* vers. 25, 26, 42. *cf.* ch. 9. 35-38.
c *cf.* Jer. 2. 13. *cf.* Is. 44. 3. *cf.* ch. 6. 51, 63.
d *cf.* ch. 6. 35, 58. *cf.* Rom. 6. 21. *cf.* Eccl. 1. 8 with Eccl. 2. 1-11.
e *cf.* Deut. 33. 23; *cf.* Gal. 5. 1 6; *cf.* Eph. 3. 17-19.
f *cf.* 1 Cor. 12. 13; *cf.* ch. 7. 37-39; *cf.* Eph. 1. 13, 14.

It was the sixth hour, under a noon-tide sun, and there a Samaritan woman came to draw water.

She too was weary, as her words presently indicate; alone, as He was alone, but only to make the essential contrast greater: she in the sin that isolates necessarily, shamefully, condemningly; He in the unique glory of His Person, of His quest, of His estrangement from the spirit of a world, in which were yet the objects that in love He sought. They were at opposite extremes,—in opposite paths,—and yet they met; not of her will or care, nor knew she what was before her; on His part, of the love which had in it its own necessity: "He *must needs* pass through Samaria."

Samaria had its name from the city which was its capital, "conservative," as it may be freely rendered, but in the interests of division. Alas, this went much further than they knew, and was but the expression of a deeper alienation, which could be healed only by Him who should cast Himself into the breach of human revolt from God, and bring back from it. "Give Me to drink" is here the first word of reconciliation, to the woman's wonder. "How dost Thou, being a Jew, ask drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria?" At once He brings before her God whom she knew not, and Himself in some way identified with the "gift of God" of which He speaks. *Had* she known, *she* would have taken the place of the needy one, which she truly was, and have sought of Him as having power and grace. He would not have refused her: *He* would have given her *living* water.

She does not understand, and His words are veiled as yet, for the water of such a springing well as that by which they were was in common phraseology "living" water. But this from Him in some mysterious way, with no visible means of drawing from that deep well, but as a "gift of God" telling out Him she had not known, in a way how different from her imaginings. The evident intention in all this, however much the terms may be discussed, is to make God in His love shine into her darkened soul, and to draw her by that love to Himself as the representative of God there for need on her part. Her wonder rises, and her eyes are fixed upon Him. She would learn from Himself, who is He? greater than her father Jacob, as it would seem, who himself depended with all his household upon this well alone! And still He draws her on, as He speaks now of the gift that He will give, not such water as she is thinking of, from the

2 (16-18): for sinners; the witness to the conscience.

2 The woman saith unto him, Sir, [g] give me this water, that I thirst not, nor come hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, Go, [h] call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus saith unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband; for thou hast had five husbands, and he whom now thou hast is not thy husband: this thou hast spoken truly.

g *cf.* ch. 6. 34. *cf.* Matt. 20. 22. *cf.* vers. 28, 29.

h *cf.* Ps. 50. 21. *cf.* ch. 2. 25. *cf.* Num. 32. 23.

well there: "Every one who drinketh of this water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall thirst no more for ever; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a spring of water springing up unto eternal life."

A marvelous advance, and a great miracle surely. Eternal life she knows in some sense. It is not a mere endless condition, but the life of the blessed. And this water, a perennial spring of refreshment within the man himself, springs up to eternal life! How her eyes would brighten and enlarge and fix themselves upon the wondrous Speaker! And yet she seems still to have grasped how little of that of which He is speaking: "Sir," she says, "give me this water, that I thirst not, *nor come hither to draw.*"

Dull she is, indeed; and little, we may think, has been gained so far. After all, she is thinking still of bodily thirst and of literal water. Yet instructive it is to see the Lord's way of dealing with such an one. The enigmatic language, —common indeed among the children of the East, yet evidently misunderstood, and left at last without such explanation as (it would be natural to say) a soul like this would require: it is plain that it is not so much the mind as it is the heart at which He is aiming; grace and truth are found in it all, and in this order: both together, and yet grace leading and characterizing; dealing with the heart even before the conscience, which is never indeed forgotten, yet never *attacked.* How different the manner in all this from that with Nicodemus, a man with so many things in his favor compared with the woman here, and yet with whom the appeal to the conscience is so earnest, so immediate, so seemingly abrupt. Yet after all, the underlying principle is the same, and the very thing which at first seems against Nicodemus is, in reality, in his favor. The woman had yet to be *drawn;* the teacher of Israel with all his Pharisaism and stiff prejudice, was yet already drawn: the latter could bear to have the conscience searched as the other at first could not.

Another thing, however, to be taken into account is just this Pharisaism of the one, while the other, though her conscience needed also to be wakened by the truth, had no false refuge under which to hide itself, and which had to be torn away. Here the advantage was on the side of the woman, the evil of whose life made it a simpler thing to turn away from it all than it was for Nicodemus with his pseudo-saintly one. Hence the one comes quickly into blessing; the other struggles and is held back.

But let us look now, apart from all question of the dealing with the woman's soul, at the truth which is brought before us here. The living water is interpreted for us in the seventh chapter as spoken of "the Spirit which they that believed on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified." We have, of course, no reason to interpret the same figure differently here from there: so that the living water speaks of the Holy Spirit as come down from heaven, the characteristic of the present or Church-period. The Lord therefore is anticipating a then future time, and hence, no doubt, we find a certain reserve as to the way in which it is spoken of, the veil being more lifted as the time of the fulfilment draws nearer. The figure combines what in the statement as to new birth we had separately, the water and the Spirit. The water as the Word is that through which the Spirit of God works, and the Spirit is thus the life of the Word. The figure of the "spring"

3 (19-26): manifestation and worship.

[3]The woman saith unto him, Sir, I [i]perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshiped in [j]this mountain, and *ye* say that at Jerusalem is the place where one must needs worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me that the hour cometh when ye shall [k]neither at this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. Ye worship ye [l]know not what; we know what we worship: for [m]salvation is of the Jews. But

i *cf.* Lk. 7. 39. *cf.* ch. 9. 17. *cf.* ch. 8. 1-11.

j *cf.* Judg. 9. 7. *ctr.* Deut. 26. 2. *cf.* Ps. 78. 67-69.

k *cf.* Zeph. 2. 11.

cf. Mal. 1. 11. *l* *cf.* 2 Ki. 17. 28-41; *cf.* Acts 17. 23; *cf.* Gal. 4. 8. *m* *cf.* Ps. 147. 19, 20; *cf.* Rom. 3. 1, 2; *cf.* Rom. 9. 4, 5; *cf.* Acts 8. 14-17; *cf.* Is. 2. 3.

gives additional force to this, and especially with the addition "springing up." Power, freshness continually maintained, are in the spring; and the spring springs up—or "leaps," a strong expression—"unto eternal life."

What is the connection here between the spring—the Spirit of God in the believer—and the life? It is not surely merely an endless flow that is intended by the expression. Nor is it that the presence of the Spirit of God in the believer is needed for the commencement of life in the soul. Unhappily there is a lack of knowledge among Christians as to the true character of that gift of the Spirit which is characteristic of Christianity. We shall have it all fully brought out by the Lord Himself in His closing words to His disciples in the present Gospel. Here all this is anticipated, as already said, in these pregnant figures; and we must therefore anticipate what is there said, sufficiently to understand what is here before us. It should take little to convince us that the gift of the Spirit, that indwelling which the Lord promises His disciples there (chap. xiv. 17)—"He shall be in you,"—did not precede life in their case, nor bring it by this personal indwelling, but *followed* it. They were already in possession of life when the Lord promised this, and *of eternal* life, for there is no other spiritual life: it is eternal life or *no* life (see chap. vi. 53, 54). He declares also that it is eternal life to know the Father, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He had sent (xvii. 3), that He had manifested the Father's name to them, and they had received His words, and believed that the Father had sent Him (6, 8). Thus they had eternal life already, when this promise was given. It could not be for them the result of a gift which was to come afterwards.

The indwelling of the Spirit necessarily supposes a house in which He could dwell; and it is not until new birth that such a house is formed. Christ received by the soul must be the foundation of it; and where Christ is, the Spirit of Christ can be. He witnesses to Christ, and thus the living waters begin to rise up in the soul, which shall henceforth be its perpetual satisfaction.

But how then "*unto* eternal life"? The water (the Word) and the Spirit have united to produce the life already. The gushing spring of living water has the same elements. The *life* is in the water; the Spirit is in the Word; but now it is the Spirit *personally* present, the Divine Witness Himself in permanence. Here all figures must fail to express the fulness of the blessing, infinite as the glorious Person. But it is plain that if eternal life is the product of the Word through the Spirit in the soul, then the satisfying fulness now must be in result to produce the abundance of the life itself in practical experience and power: the spring leaps up unto eternal life. Here eternal life is an experience, an application of "life" which we are all accustomed to distinguish from "life" as vital power,—the *life we live* from the life *by* which we live. But this is *eternal* life; and, as another has said, "to be complete, it must pour itself into the objective eternity: the eternal rests not till it comes to eternity."

After all, as interpreted by experience, the promise may seem too large. "Shall thirst no more for ever": what an assurance this is! But how little oftentimes does it seem to justify itself in actual realization. Here comes in the sad reminder for us of how we with our unbelief limit the glorious largeness of the divine promises, and often seem bent upon making falsehood of eternal Truth. Christ speaks according to the fulness of the gift bestowed. As to our

the [n]hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father [o]seeketh such as his worshipers. God is a Spirit; and those that worship him [p]must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that [q]Messias cometh, who is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I who [r]speak to thee am he.

n *cf.* ch. 5. 25. *cf.* ch. 16. 25, 32.
o *cf.* Lk. 19. 10. *cf.* ch. 6. 44.
p *cf.* Acts 7. 48. *cf.* Heb. 10. 19–22. *cf.* Heb. 13. 10–16. *cf.* Phil. 3. 3.
q ch. 1. 41, 49; *cf.* Deut. 18. 15–19.
r *cf.* ch. 9. 37; *cf.* Matt. 16. 15–17.

enjoyment of it, it is always conditional upon the way in which faith entertains it. We are not to "grieve the Holy Spirit of God whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption." But Christ is not going to draw in, in His picture of the Christian, things which are only blots and disfigurements. Alas for the unchristianity of Christians! but the shame of it is all our own. Eternal life is in us derived and dependent, needing the constant ministry of divine grace to maintain it in its manifestation in us, to develop and perfect it according to God. The full perfection of it is set before us to provoke our longing after it, and the boldness of faith to claim it from God. We are not to expect that it will be realized without the activity of faith and the diligent use of what God has given us as means to its attainment.

[2] Let us go back now to the woman. Attracted, wondering, faith in this mysterious Speaker beginning to awaken in her soul, she asks for this gift, pledged to her for the asking. "Sir," she says, "give me this water, that I thirst not, nor come hither to draw." She asks, but indeed knows not the gift of God, nor who it is that says to her, "Give Me to drink." But divine grace that is at work with her will not leave her thus, nor despise the day of small things which is nevertheless that work begun. Her heart is touched, desire awakened, her soul turning towards God; now she must have her conscience reached, that she may realize what her need is and find the satisfaction of it. But with what a gentle hand does He touch the sore that He is going to heal! the worse the sore the more gentle must be the handling. As if He would have her but bring another to share the gift for which she has asked, He says, "Go call thy husband and come hither." At once her life is bare before her. She shrinks and would cover it: "I have no husband." True, He says: I know it: "thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly."

So it is out. Put into few brief words, no lingering upon it, no upbraiding with it, there it yet lies before her in the light, never to be covered up again. He knows it, has known it, knew it when approaching her at first He had told her of God as she had never known Him. Now it is out, it seems like a confession He has made for her who had not courage to make it for herself. Said plainly indeed, yet not severely, but gently, pitifully, the words are like a pleading for her, a revelation of Himself. Is she not glad to be with Him upon these terms? nothing kept back, as indeed nothing could be kept back, from Him?

[3] "Sir," she says, "I perceive that Thou art a prophet:" that is her seal set to the truth of His words; and then, with that desire which He has awakened, to be (as even she, it seems, may be,) with God—therefore to be right with God, to approach Him in His own way, she puts the question of questions for a Samaritan: "Our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and *ye* say that Jerusalem is the place where one must needs worship."

It surely is not a putting off from her the first question of her sins. Had He not, with full knowledge of them, yet encouraged her to seek from God that gift of His, which she could see better now that He as the representative of God could offer to her? And in drawing near to God was there not a provision for sin, of His own establishment? Little she knew about the meaning of that yet. Little, as yet, did His own disciples know, even though the Baptist had pointed

2 (27-42): The work widens; two days of testimony.

2. And upon this [s]came his disciples, and wondered that he was speaking with *a woman; yet no one said, What seekest thou? or, Why speakest thou with her? The woman then [t]left her water-pot and went away into the city, and saith unto the men, Come, see a man who [u]told me all things that I ever did: is not this the Christ? They went out of the city [therefore],† and came to him.

s ver. 8.

t *cf.* Lk. 5. 11, 27, 28. *cf.* Phil. 3. 7.

u *cf.* Ps. 50. 21. *cf.* ch. 3. 19, 20.

* Or "the." The absence of the article does not necessarily make the noun indefinite.

† Many omit.

to the "Lamb of God." Was there not, however, in her heart something beginning which could make her better understand about that spring within the heart, of living water? And here was One who could resolve her doubts, and give her questions a divine answer! He does; but in a way how different from her expectations, when He sets aside *both* Gerizim and Jerusalem! To her the poor Samaritan, He makes known what those in closest companionship with Himself were as yet not prepared for. Yet He does not leave the question of Samaritan worship unsettled either; rather it assumes a more serious character: but first He tells her of the transcendent hour at hand which should abolish all outside worship and let men into the sanctuary of God, as children to worship the Father. What a revelation to this woman of shameful life, to whom just a moment before that life had been shown out without a remnant of a veil to hide it! Yet who among the mere children of men was better fitted than she, upon any title in himself, to draw near? And, if God were showing grace, to whom rather than to such as she would that grace manifest itself in more glory?

And now it was the Father seeking worshipers. Could it be kept back, the spring of happiness which in her also was beginning to well up, interpreting that former perplexing figure, and already seeking outflow? True, she had worshiped she knew not what; coldly, indifferently, or with spasms of dread in the gloom of the supernatural. And all the while in Israel, though even there the mass might know it as little as she, was the river of *salvation*. "Salvation" was "of the Jews": a stream which as yet indeed ran low and narrow between its banks, which the lowly and the thirsty alone knew of, but which was *there:* soon to burst forth in copious refreshment; salvation, by which men came to know God! And the hour was coming, *and now was*,—how that announcement must have woke the echoes in her heart!—when the *true* worshipers (not righteous, not self-approved, yet *true*)—when the true worshipers should worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father was seeking such to worship Him in the only way in which God, as a Spirit, could be acceptably worshiped.

Yes, she knew it, or, at least, approved it as He spake it, but too wonderful it seemed; the rush of many thoughts too great. Then as she yet believed not for joy and wondered, the cry arose in her heart for the full Interpreter of all, Messias! was He at hand? Then indeed would all perplexity be ended, all anxiety at rest: "when He is come," she says, "He will tell us all things."

And He who saw divinely all her heart, as He had seen her life,—seen the craving of her heart, seeking the good that came not, saw His work was done. For her there was but one satisfying good remaining: One for whom now the joy that had arisen in her soul waited as its justification, whom the expected longing of her heart forewitnessed as at hand: Messias, the Christ. There was but one thing more to do: and with His own heart full (as presently He bears witness that it is) yet with the quiet of that supreme contentment in His words, He completes her blessedness:—

"I that speak to thee am HE."

Thus is the living water reached for her, if not yet the Spirit of God had come

In the meanwhile his disciples asked him, saying, Rabbi, eat. But he said unto them, I have [v]food to eat that ye know not. His disciples therefore said to one another, Hath any one brought him to eat? Jesus saith unto them, [w]My food is that I should do the will of him who sent me, and finish his work. Say ye not that there are yet four months and the harvest cometh? Behold, I say to you, Lift up your eyes, and look upon the fields; for they are [x]white already unto the harvest. He that reapeth receiveth [y]wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal, that he that soweth and he that reapeth may [z]rejoice together. For in this is the saying true, [a]One soweth and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that on which ye have not labored: [b]others have labored, and ye have entered into their labors.

And [c]many of the Samaritans out of that city believed on him on account of the word of the woman who testified, He told me all things that I ever did. When therefore the Samaritans came to him, they [d]asked him to abide with them, and he abode there two days. And more a great deal believed on account of his word. And they said unto the woman, No longer do we believe on account of [e]thy saying; for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the [f]Saviour of the world.

v cf. Matt. 16. 6–12.
w ch. 6. 38–40. ch. 17. 4. *cf.* Lk. 2. 49.
x cf. Matt. 9. 36–38. *cf.* 1 Cor. 16. 8, 9. *cf.* Acts 18. 9–11.
y cf. Ps. 126. 6. *cf.* 1 Thess. 2. 19, 20. *cf.* 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.
z cf. 1 Cor. 3. 6–9. *cf.* Am. 9. 13.
a cf. Acts 18. 27. *cf.* Col. 2. 1, 2.
b cf. Matt. 11. 13. *cf.* Heb. 1. 1, 2.
c ver. 42. *cf.* Mk. 5. 19.
d ctr. Mk. 5. 17.
e cf. 1 Ki. 10. 6, 7.
f 1 Jno. 4. 14. *cf.* ch. 3. 16, 17.

to be the indwelling Spring of it within her. Doctrinally, the connection of the whole is plain; as indeed the Lord's words carry us on to the day of an opened sanctuary and of Christian worship. Without this the fulness of life in the Spirit could not be expressed, the living water could not spring up. We see clearly also how anticipative, how Christian, in the truth contained in it, the Gospel of John is. We shall notice this more and more as we go on in it.

2. The stream of blessing widens: the woman becomes the messenger of Christ, to tell out in the city the blessedness she has received. The Man who had told her all things that she ever did is One to whom she can freely invite others. She has left her water-pot behind to carry the news of living water; and her tale procures many listeners who come out of the city to find the One who has lighted up with His love this heart so dark.

Meanwhile His disciples have come back from the city, where they had gone to buy provisions, and find Him refreshed and independent of the food. In answer to their astonishment, He tells them that His food is to do the will of Him that sent Him and to finish His work. And then He speaks to them of fields that He sees already ripening to a spiritual harvest, and of the common joy of sower and of reaper. In fact, they were to enter into the labors of previous generations, of the prophets who had prepared the way for them, Himself above all the unwearied Worker for the salvation of men. Israel might reject Him, and His labor seem vain in this respect, but here, outside of Israel, He sees the incoming of the Gentiles, while the tardy fields of Judea yet showed no sign.

Of this the Samaritans here are now the first-fruits, and there follow two days of fruitful testimony, in which at their solicitation He abides with them; many believing through the woman's witness to Him, and yet more through His own word; while their faith owns Him as the Saviour, not of Israel only, but of the world. All this shows plainly what is foreshadowed here.

SECTION 4. (Chap. iv. 43–54):
Israel's need bared and met with mercy.

Now after the two days he departed thence to Galilee. For Jesus himself bare witness that a [g]prophet hath no honor in his own country. When therefore he came into Galilee the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for [h]they also went to the feast. He came therefore again to Cana of Galilee, where he had made the [i]water wine. And there was a certain *courtier whose [j]son was sick at Capernaum. This man, having heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, went to him and asked him that he would come down and heal his son: for he was at the [k]point of death. Jesus therefore said unto him, Except ye see [l]signs and wonders ye will not believe. The courtier saith unto him, †Sir, come down, ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, [m]Go, thy son liveth. The man [n]believed the word that Jesus said unto him, and went his way. But already, while he was going down, his servants met him, saying that his son lived. He inquired of them therefore the hour at which he began to amend. They said therefore unto him, Yesterday, at the seventh hour the fever left him. Then the father [o]knew that it was at that hour at which Jesus said to him, Thy son liveth; and himself [p]believed, and his whole house. This [q]second sign again did Jesus when he came out of Judea into Galilee.

g Matt. 13. 57.
h ch. 2. 23. cf. ch. 7. 1-9.
i ch. 2. 1-11.
j cf. Lk. 8. 41, 42. cf. Lk. 9. 38. cf. Jer. 31. 15-17.
k cf. Ps. 44. 22.
l cf. ch. 2. 18. cf. Matt. 12. 38-42. cf. ch. 20. 29.
m cf. Matt. 15. 28. cf. Matt. 8. 13.
n cf. ver. 53.
o ctr. ch. 9. 18, 24.
p cf. ch. 11. 45.
q ch. 2. 11.

*Literally, "king's officer." Probably attached to Herod's court.
†Or "Lord."

Sec. 4.

But John, while he shows us characteristically a Christ outside of Judaism, and the precious truths which are now enjoyed in Christianity, always reminds us that God has not given up His purposes as to Israel, which are delayed but not forfeited by their unbelief. We have seen this in the first division of the book, in the miracle at Cana, where the delay of blessing in their case is accounted for, but as soon as the empty forms of purification are made real (the water fills the water-pots), then the wine, the good wine, is found in them. Now the Lord is found at Cana again, having left the white fields of Samaria for Galilee, and another miracle is wrought, though the subject of it is at Capernaum, not Cana. Judea has rejected Him, but Galilee seems ready to receive Him, and now in the courtier who comes to Him at Cana we find a plain picture of Israel, courtier of the world as she has long been. His condition, as the Lord characterizes it, is just what hers has been: "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." But he is in need: his son at the point of death in Capernaum, the city of lost opportunities, to be brought down to hades for its rejection of Christ; death facing him, he turns to Christ as his only hope, and finds the gracious answer of peace and deliverance: "Go, thy son liveth." He believes, departs, and finds it as the Lord has said to him. His son is raised up, and his whole house is brought to faith with him.

It is a simple story; and thus will Israel in her extremity be brought to God. Capernaum will come to Cana, the "village of consolation" be restored to its name upon the ground of "purchase," Christ manifesting forth His glory. And the time is not far distant now.

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chaps. v.–viii. 1.)

Eternal Life as separating from a World under Death.

SECTION 1. (Chap. v.)

Quickening by the sovereign grace of Christ; righteousness attaching to it.

1 (1-9): The power of Christ when grace itself (in connection with law) is barren.

1. AFTER these things was a [r]feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem by the [s]sheep-[place]* a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porches. In these, lay a [t]multitude of the sick, blind, lame, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down, at a certain season, in the pool, and troubled the water. [u]Whoever then first stepped in after the troubling of the water, was made whole of whatever disease he had.† Now a certain man was there who had been in his infirmity [v]thirty and eight years.

r *cf.* ch. 6. 4.

s Neh. 3. 1, 32. *cf.* Is. 53. 7.

t *cf.* Mk. 1. 32, 33.

u *cf.* Ezek. 18. 20–23. *cf.* Is. 55. 7. *ctr.* Rom. 5. 6.

v *cf.* Deut. 28. 59. *cf.* ch. 9. 1.

* Or "gate."

† The most ancient MSS. generally omit from "waiting" to "had." But the Alexandrian retains it, with the Vulgate. And the narrative needs it for its complete intelligibility.

This rounds off to a complete end, as is evident, the first subdivision of this central portion of the book.

SUBD. 2.

The second subdivision continues the subject of the first, eternal life as communicated to men, and dependent, a life of faith and communion; but this is now looked at as distinguishing and separating from the world, from its character and portion. As in the last subdivision also, the Spirit of God is seen as giving the life its power and fulness, and even under the same image as before, the living water; but it is now not simply rising up within and refreshing the one in whom it is, but overflowing to others also, "*rivers* of living water." This is naturally a third section; the first shows the life as quickening by the voice of the Son of God, who is at the same time the Judge of men; and the quickening is thus an acquittal by the Judge, a sentence of righteousness. The second shows us the life of faith with its sustenance, and communion resulting. The three sections together form evidently once more a complete whole.

Sec. 1.

The first section has been already briefly characterized. We find in it, more clearly than in what has preceded, an incident taken from one of the Lord's abundant miracles, and made an object lesson from which the teaching following it is drawn. Yet the truth given goes beyond the illustrative object, as is necessarily the case in one way or other with all typical or parabolic teaching: a thing which needs to be at once fully realized, and guarded from the abuse which has been often made of it. We shall have help given as to this in all this part of John.

1. The impotent man as healed by Christ is the object lesson of this chapter. The background of this is the story of Bethesda with its own impotence to heal such a case as his, spite of the angelic intervention, which made the pool a "house of mercy," but with conditions with which the man here before us could not comply. The nature of the disease forbade his availing himself of the proffered remedy.

A "feast of the Jews" brings up the Lord again to Jerusalem. We are not even told what feast it was, and the language seems plainly to tell us why, sufficiently striking as it is, even in John's Gospel, where alone it is found. A "feast of the *Jews*," as such, we are outside of here, even though it was the occasion of the Lord's visit; which, indeed, as all this Jerusalem ministry, only

When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been already a long time [thus], he saith unto him, [w] Wilt thou be made whole? The infirm man answered him, Sir, I have [x] no man, when the water is troubled, to

[w] *cf.* ver. 40. *cf.* Lk. 15. 28.
[x] *cf.* Lk. 10. 31, 32. *cf.* Is. 63. 5.

served to expose the hollowness of what was going on there, and along with this the powerlessness of the law itself as a remedy for man's condition. This last is surely the main point here: it brings us at once to what Bethesda shows us,—a truth which sets aside all help in the old covenant, and shuts one up to the grace of God alone.

Bethesda immediately comes into view with its porches filled with the sick, who are waiting for the visitation of that miraculous power which at a certain season troubled the water. Then for the moment there is healing virtue for the one who can first step in: there is the condition, the only one; whatever the virulence of the disease, it may be cured, if only one can get into the pool; but for impotence there is no healing possible.

In the midst of this multitude our eyes are fixed upon one man who lies there vainly seeking help. For thirty and eight years the disease that has fastened upon him has rendered him helpless; and there he lies in the presence of a remedy which for him is none. Others may be healed, not he. He is not able to step into the pool; he has none to put him in. The desperateness of this condition engages the heart and hand of Jesus on his behalf; he is not put into the pool; but he hears the omnipotent word which heals him, and in a moment rises up, takes up the bed he lies upon and walks.

As all these miracles are types of spiritual healing, we cannot be wrong in interpreting this of such. Moreover, the connection in this case between sin and helplessness is plain from our Lord's words to this man afterwards (ver. 14). It is a general truth which the Lord affirms that "he that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin" (ch. viii. 34, R. V.); and none can break this bondage but the Redeemer of men. All modes of healing man's disease, short of the power and grace of Christ Himself, do but by their failure make its obduracy more manifest, and the need of Christ. And for this the law was given—not of God's choice, but of man's choice—to demonstrate against his unbelief man's utter helplessness. For all modes of man's devising are but law in principle, and men can imagine no other: it must be man's work or God's grace. Of the impossibility of its being the former Bethesda speaks to us.

The law, indeed, as given the first time,—pure law and nothing else,—had nothing remedial in its nature, and as under it Israel stood not at all, so none could expect to stand. The first tables of the covenant were broken at the foot of the mount by the hand of him who had just brought them down, and nothing remained of it but penalty.

But this was not the sufficient trial of man, for the very reason that in it as yet there was nothing remedial. We recognize without much difficulty that we are sinners, and that God must show mercy, while yet we cannot give up the legal principle. We need forgiveness,—need help,—need abatement of the severity of pure law: that is readily owned; but to give up all possibility—all need, therefore—of human work, man's pride and conscience unite in an earnest struggle against such a complete setting aside of responsibility, as he imagines it,—such an acknowledgment of complete failure in responsibility as it really means. Thus arise the various schemes of amalgamation of law and grace with which the religious systems of men abound; all of which the second giving of the law anticipated and has set aside, while it has shown how alone such a scheme could satisfy the requirements of the divine character.

The standard of responsibility never can be lowered, whether actually or virtually. The same tables of the covenant that had been broken are restored. The mercy of God may blot out the past, and allow a new beginning, but never an alteration of the terms (if they are to be legal terms) of final acceptance.

2 (9-18): The ruin for sinful men which would result from law being maintained with them; and the opposition of the men of law.

put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another goeth down before me. Jesus saith unto him, [y]Rise, take up thy bed and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked.

2. And on the same day was the [z]sabbath. The [a]Jews therefore said unto him that was healed, It is the sabbath; it is not lawful for thee to take up thy bed. But he answered them, He that [b]made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk. They asked

[y] Matt. 9. 6, 7. *cf.* Acts 14. 8-10. *cf.* Rom. 4. 19, 23-25.
[z] ch. 9. 14. *cf.* Lk. 6. 6-10.
[a] *cf.* Matt. 12. 2, etc.
[b] *cf.* Mk. 2. 28.

Thus with the declaration made this second time, that God is "gracious and merciful, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin," it is no less positively maintained that He "can *by no means* clear the guilty." "When the wicked man turneth from his wickedness, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive"; but it must be "that which is lawful and right,"—nothing less. But that is the very thing which is so hopeless.

If God can accept less, how much less? where can one stop? with the best that one can do? A careless soul may treat that carelessly; but who ever *has* done really the best one could? Will He take less still? These thoughts are only inventions of the enemy, and of which the word of God knows nothing. But then the whole scheme breaks down at that very point.

This Bethesda witnesses: at the place of sheep, whether gate or pool (the doubt about what it is may be itself significant), the "house of mercy" rears its five pillars, clinging still to the number of responsibility, with no help for the impotent such as is this man, for thirty-eight years afflicted for his sin, as Israel for theirs wandered in the wilderness an equal time, until "that evil generation" had perished from among them. No thought could there have been of help in the pool at all, if that heavenly influence had not *troubled* the water. But for him it is still in vain—vain as the troubling of law by grace, which in a legal system is always that, two contradictory principles being at work in it. From the typical point of view, however, the case of the impotent man is no exception; yet how many as with him think of it as such, are "coming," but always ineffectually, and looking for help, whether from man or God, to get into the pool.

How new an experience comes with the voice of Jesus. "Wilt thou be made whole?" Yet he begins to talk about the pool. Why not? Must it not be of God, when the angel comes down into it? And the law: is it not of God? was it not "given by the disposition of angels"? And we would even have Christ but a servant of Moses, a means of enabling us to keep the law; or One giving virtue to sacramental ordinances, always with man's aid in some way to perfect them. But Jesus passes by the pool altogether, making whole at once by His word. The thirty-eight years of impotence are ended in a moment: the man rises and walks.

2. Conflict begins on the part of the fleshly religionists who know neither their own need nor the grace of God. We have seen the image of law in the pool, and the grace and power of Christ manifested in contrast with it. We shall find in what follows how fully in accordance with this is the truth that is now to come before us. The healed man in obedience to the Lord's word takes up his bed; and that day was the Sabbath. The Jews naturally object that he is violating the law; and his answer throws the entire responsibility for this upon the One who healed him. He knows not even who He is, He has got lost from him among the throng: so that the miracle itself seems to have had no right effect upon him; and this is confirmed by what shortly follows, when the Lord, finding him in the temple, warns him not to bring on himself again by sin a judgment which would increase in severity. The result is that he goes and tells the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole.

Thereupon the anger of the Jews flames out against Jesus because He has done

him, therefore, Who is the man who said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk? But he that had been healed knew not who it was; for Jesus had [c]withdrawn himself, a multitude being in that place. After these things Jesus findeth him in the temple and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: [d]sin no more, lest some [e]worse thing befall thee. The man departed and [f]told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole. And on this account the Jews [g]persecuted Jesus [and sought to slay him,]* because he had done these things on the sabbath. But Jesus answered them, My Father is [h]working until now, and I work. Therefore the more did the Jews seek to kill him, because he had not only broken the sabbath, but also said that God was his own Father, [i]making himself equal with God.

3 (19-29): The revelation.

1 (19-23): His unity with the Father in work and will.

3. [1]Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do [j]nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do. For whatsoever

* Many omit.

c ch. 8. 59. ch. 10. 39.

d *cf.* ch. 8. 11.

e *cf.* Matt. 12. 45. *cf.* Prov. 29. 1. *cfr.* ch. 9. 35-38.

f *cf.* 1 Sa. 22. 7-10.

g ch. 7. 19-24.

h *cfr.* Gen. 2. 2, 3. *cf.* Is. 43. 24.

i *cf.* ch. 10. 33. *cf.* Phil. 2. 6. *cf.* ch. 14. 9.

j ver. 30. *cf.* ch. 10. 17, 18. *cf.* ch. 16. 13.

these things on the Sabbath. It was for them the sign of that covenant to which they held, and which they did not discern had gone so fatally against them. The Lord in answer takes the highest ground here. True, He works on and knows no rest in His labor of love. He was in communion with His Father, who worked on and knew none. How could He rest—how could they wish God to have His rest, with men in the misery into which sin had brought them? Had *they* given Him His rest, of whom He had complained that they had made Him to serve with their sins, and wearied Him with their iniquities? (Isa. xliii. 24.) But then where were they with reference to this covenant of law of which the Sabbaths were the sign, and which had gone so terribly against them?

It was indeed the highest ground that He could take, Himself *not* with the people in their sin and failure, universal as it was, nor under its penalty, but working in the pity of His Father towards them in those divine works which manifested Him as all that He claimed to be. What could they give as answer? Nothing but, alas, the vindictive animosity of their pride so humbled, sin so unanswerably charged against them! Yet how had He charged? Nay, it was not He, whose *works* of mercy besought them rather to take shelter under the wings that brooded over them. They flung from them the appeal. Of Him, the Son of the Father, in their midst, they will not permit themselves to face the possibility, and as the only alternative must persecute Him to the death for claiming it.

3. They are in fact forced to a decision; and He will not leave them, therefore, without the distinct revelation of the glory that is His. This follows consequently immediately, with an overwhelming argument against their unbelief. The effect seems to have been for the time the silencing of His accusers, although their enmity is not removed, and we find it at His next visit to Jerusalem bursting out in a more determined effort to get Him into their hands.

[1] They might have misunderstood Him as to His unique claim to have God for His Father; although no Israelite would have ventured to speak of God after that manner. That God was a Father to Israel meant something very different, as they rightly conceived, though faith might have found in it an encouragement to draw nearer to Him than in fact there was ability for. But the Lord leaves them no room to doubt in what follows now of the high and exclusive way in which He declares Himself the Son of God. Even the refusal of the possibility of an independent will with Him in what He did, was itself a claim of the highest kind that could be made, consistent with the unity of the Godhead. It is

things *he* doeth, these things the Son also doeth in like manner. For the [k]Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that he himself doeth; and [l]greater works than these will he show him, that ye may marvel. For as the Father [m]raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, so also the Son quickeneth whom he [n]will. For neither doth the Father [o]judge any one, but hath given all judgment to the Son; that all may [p]honor the Son, even as they honor the Father: he that honoreth not the Son [q]honoreth not the Father who hath sent him.

k ch. 3. 35. ch. 15. 9,10.
l *cf.* ch. 14. 12.
m ch. 11. 43, 44.
n *cf.* Jno. 15. 16.
o *cf.* Acts 17. 31. *cf.* Ps. 2. 6. *cf.* Matt. 26. 63-65.
p *cf.* Phil. 2. 10, 11. *cf.* Rev. 5. 11-14.
q *cf.* Lk. 10. 16. *cf.* ch. 15. 23; *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 23.

true, also, that the unity of which he speaks here is a practical, ethical one, and not a unity of essence; but it goes so far as to lead up to this. He does not either for a moment forget the manhood that He has taken. The Father "shows" Him; He "sees what the Father does" and does in like manner; but who beside the Eternal Son could speak of doing "in like manner" to the Father? even to raising up the dead and quickening them?

The threefold "verily, verily,"—the strong form of affirmation which only John records—naturally divides what is here said into three parts; the first of which declares this practical unity. So perfect is it that He *can* do nothing of Himself; there is a moral impossibility of His doing anything that is not the expression of the Father's mind. He sees the Father's doing, and does in like manner whatever the Father does. Omniscience and omnipotence are involved in this, and yet in One who is in the place of dependence, but to whom, in the love He has to Him, the Father shows all things that He does. The One who is able to see all that God sees: who is He?

Thus what had startled the Jews—the recent miracle—was but a small thing in comparison of what would indeed awaken their wonder. The Father, they acknowledged, raised the dead and quickened them*: true, and the Son quickens whom He will. But this involves power in His hands as Judge: for to bring up really from the dead those to whom death, as with men in general, is by divine sentence, means judicial power to reverse that sentence. This leads on to a most important consequence, as we shall see directly. In fact, the Father judges no one, but has committed all (final, definitive) judgment to the Son, giving Him honor such as belongs to the Father Himself; and indeed, necessarily, he who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father either: for He has sent Him. Such is the unity of the Son with the Father. It is a unity in Godhead; or else we are taught to give to a creature the honor due to God alone.

[2]Such then is the glory of the One they are challenging He is the divine Judge of all: the Lord of life and death. Hence follows the blessed consequence: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent Me hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but is passed out of death into life." Thus with the possession of eternal life comes deliverance not merely from condemnation, as the common version renders it, but from judgment itself; the very reception of life is an acquittal: the Judge has spoken, and there is no more judgment needing to be reached.

Eternal life is thus marked by bowing to the word of Christ, which is the accrediting of Him who sent Him; and so He says when speaking to the Father at an after-time: "This is life eternal, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (ch. xvii. 3). On the other hand, those are dead who "having the understanding darkened, are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blind-

*Raising the dead without quickening might be, as in the case of Samuel: to make them really alive is a further and greater thing.

2 (24): the deliverance of the believer from death and judgment.

2 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that [r]heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath [s]eternal life, and cometh not into [t]judgment, but hath [u]passed out of death into life.

[r] *cf.* ch. 8. 43. *cf.* Matt. 13. 9. *cf.* ch. 12. 37-40. *cf.* Rom. 8. 17.

cf. 1 Pet. 1. 21. [s] ch. 3. 15. [t] *cf.* Rev. 20. 11-15; *cf.* Rom. 8. 1. [u] *cf.* Col. 1. 13.

ness"—or "hardness"—"of their hearts" (Eph. iv. 18). This, alas, is not the exceptional condition of a few among men, but of the Gentiles, the "nations," says the apostle; and Israel is no better. "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." It is God alone who can break through a barrier of this kind, and bring "out of death into life."

3 Life then is the fundamental necessity, the first thing needed by the soul: there is no middle state, as is evident, between life and death. We have to learn, and it may be only very gradually, as the child born into the world learns, what life is as the condition into which we have come; but without the life itself we could not have even the most rudimentary experience. We live the life, because we have the life whereby we live: if we do not distinguish in the spiritual realm, as we have to do in the natural, these two things from one another, all will be in confusion with us.

Life for the dead is resurrection-life; and the Lord now asserts the power of resurrection to be in His hands in a double way, spiritual and physical. He speaks as the Incarnate Word, and does not go back to the time of His pre-existence. He speaks of what shall be, but what is already begun, and of Himself as the Son of God among men, distinguishing between the "hour" of the spiritual and the "hour" of the physical renewal. The one had come already, though in its full blessedness as in Christianity, it had yet to come. The dead were already hearing the voice of the Son of God, and to every one that heard it it was life. Nor was there any distinction between the life as then given, and the life as it would be given: it was in either case an impartation of the life that was in Himself, as Source of it for men. For *as* the Father had life in Himself, *so* had He given to the Son to have life in Himself: "given," according to the divine counsel, to Him who was to be the "Last Adam," the Head of the new humanity; but thus to have it in Himself as the Father had it in Himself, as the Source from which others might derive it.

Let us clearly understand what is taught us here. The life in Him is of course eternal life: we understand why it is eternal; that which is in the Father and in the Son must be so. It is not simply because it will never end, but because also it never began: it always was and it always will be; that is eternity in the full sense of eternity.

It is not eternal life because it has come through death and is beyond it: in the Father, it never came through death; as divine life it never can be touched by it. It begins in us, and in us is in character a resurrection life; but that is not why it is eternal life, but it is eternal because it is divine.

It is life *in us* also: that is distinctly declared. Quickening is the impartation of life: except it were life in us, it would not be our being made to live at all. It is not Christ's having it in Himself that constitutes the difference between Him and those to whom He imparts it, but that He has it *as the Father has it*, is the perpetual Source and Fountain of it to others. We have it always in dependence—always in Him; were it possible to be cut off from Him, all would be at an end for us, but that does not mean that it is not in us, which it is positively asserted to be. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have *no* life in you": that on the one side; on the other, "he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath *eternal* life" (ch. vi. 53, 54). Thus it is *eternal* life or *no* life, and it is of "life in you"—therefore *eternal* life in you—that He is speaking throughout. Otherwise it would be still true as to the one who *had* eaten the flesh of the Son of man, that there was no life *in him*. And again in His first epistle John says, "Every one that hateth His brother is a murderer, and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him"

3 (25-29): resurrection manifesting His glory.

3 Verily, verily, I say unto you, that the hour cometh, and [v]now is, when the [w]dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath [x]life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself, and hath given him authority to execute [y]judgment [also],* because he is [z]Son of man. Marvel not at this, for an hour is [a]coming in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have practised† good unto a [b]resurrection of life, and they that have done† evil to a [c]resurrection of judgment.

* Some omit. † Different words in the original.

v *cf.* ch. 4. 23.
w *cf.* Eph. 2. 1, 5.
x *cf.* ch. 6. 57. *cf.* ch. 1. 4.
y ver. 22. *cf.* Acts 10. 42.
z *cf.* Matt. 25. 31.
a *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 12. *cf.* Acts 24. 15.
b *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 42-44. *cf.* 1 Thess. 4. 16. *cf.* Rev. 20. 4-6.
c *cf.* Rev. 20. 12-15.

(1 Jno. iii. 15): words that would have no force except from the fact that the Christian *has* eternal life abiding in him.

Notice that expression, "abiding in him": it naturally refers us to what we have in the Gospel afterwards, where the Lord figures under a vine and its branches the relation of His people to Himself. Here the branch abiding in the vine is the condition of the vine in its life, which is its sap, abiding in the branch. This the Lord follows up with His "ye in Me and I in you" as the condition of fruit-bearing. So in the epistle, the life abiding in the professing Christian is tested by the fruit; the abiding of the life being maintained by the constant active inflow of the fulness that is in Christ into the lives of His people.

That our life is in Christ, then,—or as John rather puts it, in the Son,—is in no wise in opposition to its being in us also, as communicated, dependent life. Such it always is, and always will be. Our ability to define or give it rightful expression is feeble enough; even natural life has never been successfully defined; in cleaving closely to the inspired language we shall find a safeguard to our thoughts which will at the same time help them to legitimate expansion.

If the Father has given to the Son to have life in Himself in the same way that the Father has, the natural corollary to this is that "He hath given Him authority to execute judgment, because He is Son of man." The giving of life we have already seen in fact to imply such authority, inasmuch as it is at the same time a freeing from judgment; that is, from coming personally into it. A giving account of ourselves there will surely be, and a judgment of works, but not a judgment *by* works or according to works. That is the judgment of the "great white throne" (Rev. xx. 12, 13), and in it no fallen creature could ever stand. Even the psalmist cries: "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant: for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified" (Ps. cxliii. 2). The confusion that exists among Christians in such a matter as this is as lamentable as it is inexcusable: for Scripture has made it as plain as can be, that, raised or changed into His image in glory, all the saints of the present and the past shall at Christ's coming be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and to be ever with Him. When He comes to judge even the living, we shall be with Him, and with Him "the saints shall judge the world." The judgment of the dead before the great white throne is separated from this by an interval of a thousand years: a broad enough division, surely. But the indifference to prophecy, and even to the subject of the Lord's coming itself, has had its sad recompense in the loss of knowledge of things of fundamental importance to Christianity itself.

Judgment, all final judgment, is in the hands of Christ alone: for the tender and beautiful reason, "because He is Son of man." By a Man perfect in manhood, who has known even the weakness of it, as that title, "Son of man" indicates,—by One who "gave His flesh for the life of the world"—shall the world be judged. What assurance this gives of the most perfect consideration for creature frailty, of all circumstances that can be pleaded, in the judgment executed!

4 (30–47): The failure of man under test.
1 (30–32): of His own true witness.
2 (33–35): of John His messenger.

4. [1] I can of [d]myself do nothing; as I hear I judge; and my judgment is righteous, because I [e]seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. If I bear [f]witness concerning myself, my witness is not true: there is [g]another who beareth witness concerning me, and I know that the witness that he witnesseth concerning me is true.

[2] Ye [h]sent unto John, and he hath borne witness to the truth. But I [i]receive not witness from man; but these things I say that ye may be [j]saved. He was the [k]lamp, burning and shining; and ye were willing for a [l]season to rejoice in his light.

d ver. 19. *cf.* ch. 8. 28.
e ch. 6. 38. *cf.* ch. 7.18.
f *cf.* ch. 8.13, 14, 18, 54.
g ver. 37.
h *cf.* ch.1.19-28.
i *cf.* ch.17.25.
j ch. 1. 7. *cf.* ch.12.28-30, 35.
k *cf.* Matt.5. 14.
l *cf.* Matt.3. 5-7.

Lastly, physical resurrection is also in His hand: "The hour is coming in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice and shall come forth"—the hour for each and all, but which does not necessarily imply the *same* hour for each and all: which we are assured by many another scripture that in fact it will not be. "Every man in his own order," says the apostle: "Christ the first-fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's, at His coming" (1 Cor. xv. 23). There is no confusion. "Each" will be "in his own rank," as it would be better rendered; and each rank will come forth at its appointed time; only "*they that are Christ's*, at His coming."

Time is not specified in the Lord's words here; for time does not affect the question of authority, and it is of the authority given to Him that He is speaking. But the "life" and "judgment" which are in His hands to dispense characterize respectively two contrasted resurrections. "They that have done good" come forth "to a resurrection of life; and they that have done evil to a resurrection of judgment." In either case death is seen in its merely provisional character: for the full carrying out of God's purpose it must disappear. Man apart from the body is not man as God made him; and therefore not what His dealings contemplate. Life, on the one hand, claims the body of the saint; as judgment, on the other hand, the body of the sinner. It is for the "deeds done in the body" men are to receive; and it is *in* the body that they are to receive it. And it is noticeable that the saint here, as well as the sinner, is characterized by his "doings." Although life is a "gift," and not a reward, yet the fruits of that life, brought forth by the renewed man, are recognized in the resurrection. The holiness of God is seen in result to have been maintained by His grace, as it is manifested in the judgment of evil.

4. Thus the Lord has in the presence of His enemies, soon to be as criminals before His judgment-seat, revealed His personal glory as the Son of the Father, with the authority belonging to Him as Man, come in the purpose of divine love among men. He proceeds to reprove them for their unbelief, in view of the witness that had been given to Him in so many ways. The character of His own testimony; the testimony of His forerunner; the supernatural works which accredited Him on the Father's part; the Father's own testimony; the Scriptures accepted by themselves: all united to put His claims beyond the power of all the cavils of unbelief to affect. And He then proceeds to point out the nature of the unbelief itself which they manifested, what it proceeded from, what it would lead to, and leaves them in the hands of Moses, whom they so trusted, yet who was their real accuser before God. It is a crushing reply, which for the present seems to stagger and confound them, so that we hear of nothing from them more, until after another period of labor in Galilee, He returns at the feast of tabernacles to Jerusalem.

[1] He returns to speak of that practical oneness which he had with the Father, which forbade Him doing anything simply of Himself. As a consequence, no independent will of His own perverted His judgment. He judged as He heard: that is, according to the real facts of the case. This perfect simplicity made His

3 (36, 37): of signs and manifestations.

4 (38–40): the failure of their own experience.

5 (41–44): the conditions of faith.

3 But I have witness greater than that of John: for the [m] works which the Father hath given me to complete them, the very works that I do bear witness concerning me that the Father hath sent me. And the Father who hath sent me, [n] he hath borne witness concerning me. Ye have neither [o] heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

4 And ye [p] have not his word abiding in you: for him whom he hath [q] sent, him ye believe not. Ye search * the [r] Scriptures: for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they that [s] witness concerning me: and ye [t] will not come unto me, that ye might have life.

5 I receive not [u] glory from men; but I know you, that ye have not the [v] love of God in you. I have come in my [w] Father's name, and ye receive me not; if [x] another

m ch. 10. 25, 38. ch. 14. 11.
n Matt.3.16, 17.
o *cf.* ch. 12. 29. *cf.* ch. 1.18.
p ver. 42. *cf.*ch.14.23.
q ver. 24.
r *cf.* Matt.2. 4-6. *cf.*Lk.24.25 -27.
s *cf.*Deut.18. 15-18. *cf.*Rom.1.2. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 10-12.
t *cf.* Lk. 14. 18. *cf.* ch. 1.11.
u *cf.* Is.53.3. *cf.* 2 Pet. 1. 17.

* So far as the form is concerned this may be rendered as an imperative.

cf. Acts 3. 13. v *cf.* ch. 8. 42; *cf.* Lk. 11. 42. w *cf.* ch. 7. 28, 29; *cf.* ch. 17. 4. x *cf.* Matt. 24. 5, 11, 24; *cf.* 2 Thess. 2. 8-12; *cf.* Rev. 13. 11-15.

word to be indeed the word of God, and to have a character far removed from that of others. Thus it had to be confessed, "Never man spake like this Man." It was indeed the most signal witness to Him. Yet it stood not alone: it would have been an anomaly had it done so, and the word of the law, "the testimony of two is true," would have rendered it invalid. If He bore witness regarding Himself, though perfectly qualified to do so, it would not by itself be *valid:* which is clearly the meaning of the law. The testimony of one man might be true—absolutely; just as true in itself as that of two. But it would not be true in the same way to others: it would need confirmation. The Lord appeals therefore to another testimony—His Father's. This confirmed His own in such a way as that there could not be any more testimony needed. And, in fact, all the testimony of which He speaks here resolves itself into these.

2 John's testimony He refers to: a merciful concession to the need of man, though as a merely human one *He* could not have need of it. It was a call to rouse men's attention and awaken the sense of need on their part; and in fact many had been roused: they had sent to him and he had borne witness to the truth. He was as the lamp, burning and shining, not the light of day, but lighting up the darkness of the night. They had been glad of it, and willing to avail themselves of its cheer for a season. Limited like all of man both as to time and place, John's testimony had of necessity to give way to Him of whom he testified.

3 But now there was greater witness. The glorious works that were being done by Him, and which in their *completeness* spoke of a work far more glorious, these were gifts from the Father which manifested His Son, while the Father had even directly uttered His voice in attestation. But *they,* alas, had never at any time heard His voice—to them He had never spoken; nor had they seen one form of His many manifestations.

4 The Lord proceeds to speak of what in one sense was, in another should have been, a matter of their own experience. Scripture was in their hands, they searched it, they thought they found in it eternal life. Well it spoke of Him, the Giver of life: yet they would not come to Him to find it. In fact they had not God's word abiding in them; for the One whom He had sent they believed not.

5 The truth was, the conditions of faith were lacking in them. They received glory from one another; they did not seek it from God; they had not the love of God. Thus One coming in His Father's Name they would not receive. But that would put them into the hands of Antichrist. He will come in his own

come in his own name, him ye will receive. How can ye believe who receive [y] glory one from another, and seek not the glory that cometh from God only? Think not that I will [z] accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, [a] Moses, in whom ye trust; for if ye had believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he [b] wrote concerning me. But if ye [c] believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

y ch. 12. 43.

z *cf.* ch. 3. 17. *cf.* ch. 12. 47.

a *cf.* Rom. 3. 19, 20.

b *cf.* Num. 21. 9. *cf.* Lk. 24. 44.

c *cf.* Lk. 16. 29–31. *cf.* Acts 13. 27. *cf.* 2 Cor. 3. 14.

SECTION 2. (Chap. vi.)

Eternal life as a life of faith, and its sustenance.

1 (1-21): Christ according to Old Testament promise

1 (1-14): As Jehovah, the Creator, Source of Israel's blessings.

1. [1] AFTER these things Jesus went away beyond the sea of Galilee [that is,] of [d] Tiberias. And a great multitude followed him, [e] because they saw the signs that he wrought upon the sick. And Jesus went up into the mountain, and there sat with his disciples. But the [f] passover, the feast of the Jews, was nigh. When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great multitude coming to him, he saith unto Philip, Whence should we

d Matt. 14. 13–21. Mk. 6. 35–44. Lk. 9. 10–17.

e *cf.* ver. 26. *cf.* Matt. 4. 23, 24.

f ch. 2. 13. ch. 5. 1. ch. 11. 55.

name, doing his own will, and be received. A solemn thing to realize, and yet most sure, that all that would displace Christ in the soul makes room for Antichrist.

They could not believe, therefore. Moses had written of Him; and they trusted Moses, without believing His testimony. Moses, not He, was their accuser. If they had believed Moses, they would have believed Him. If they believed not Moses' writings, how would they believe His words? A serious question for the days in which we are.

Sec. 2.

We now have eternal life as a life of faith, a life ministered to and sustained by the bread from heaven, the antitype of the manna, but which (even on that account) transcends it. In the same way as in the last section the history is the text, from which as its occasion the truth is drawn, or which gives shape to it, though this goes far beyond, as there, what the occasion could suggest. The two parts into which the section is in this way naturally divided, are otherwise also in contrast with one another: the first giving the Lord's presentation to Israel, which was rendered vain by their unbelief; the second, the Christian verity which translates all their blessing into higher truth.

1. [1] The Lord is again in Galilee or the neighborhood, and a great multitude is gathered around him. The question of providing for such a company is raised by the Lord Himself and is addressed to Philip; who replies that it would take more than 200 pence (or denarii) even scantily to supply them. Andrew thereupon suggests that there was a lad there who had five barley loaves and two small fishes; but, as he intimates, there was no real hope in that. Yet the Lord accepts and uses these, even though it veil in some degree the wonder of that which He is about to do. The men are made to sit down, and He blesses and distributes to them; the ministration by disciples' hands is not found in John as in the Synoptists; here we have only the divine hand that really accomplished all. *He* provides; *He* ministers: Jehovah, the Creator, in tender care for all; none lost in the general mass; the details cared for, as we see all through nature, not left to the rougher management of subordinates. By and by, when all are filled, then even the fragments must not be wasted: the very last thing, perhaps, that we should expect from One who could work a miracle like this. But it is not a miracle—a "wonder" merely—but a "sign": significant all through. Where is the ragged end of nature? where are her mere useless dust-heaps? where will you find the thing she wastes? Nay, her very instruments of destruction are

buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to [g] prove him: for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth * of bread is not enough for them, that each may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a [h] lad here, who hath five [i] barley-loaves and two small fishes; but what are these for so many? Jesus said, Make the men [j] sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. The men therefore sat down, in number about five thousand. Jesus took the loaves therefore, and having given [k] thanks, he distributed to those that were set down, and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. And when they were filled, he saith unto his disciples, Gather together the [l] fragments that remain over, that nothing may be lost. They [m] gathered them together therefore, and filled twelve hand-baskets with the fragments of the five barley-loaves, that remained over unto those who had eaten.

[2] Then the men, when they saw the sign that Jesus

g *cf.* Lk. 9. 18. *cf.* ver. 67.

h *cf.* Jer.1.6, 7. *cf.* 1 Cor.1. 27, 28.

i *cf.* Judg.7. 13. *cf.* Ex. 4.2.

j *cf.* Is.30.15. *cf.* Is. 55. 2.

k *cf.* ch. 11. 41, 42. *cf.*Lk.22.19.

l *cf.* Lev.23. 22.

m *cf.*Neh.8. 10.

[2] (14-21): Rejected, a stormy sea for faith until He comes.

* Denarii.

but transformers, and in the interests of preservation: "that nothing be lost" is a principle that runs through all.

[2] Christ then is here displayed in divine power amidst the people; and the question comes, as ever, how will they respond to it? They do, in fact, recognize that "this is of a truth that prophet that cometh into the world"; and they would gladly avail themselves of the power manifest, using it, however, for their own ends, and controlling it by their own will. The result is, as the Lord foresees, that they would take Him by force and make Him a King! they would compel Him to be the leader of one of those popular revolts against Roman authority, which at a later time occurred so often. Once committed to it, as they thought, beyond the power of drawing back, He would resign Himself to the will of the multitude and become the Deliverer for which all were looking. How strange a thing is the mind of man, when perverted by that very will which in this case they believe has so much power, but which only avails to cloud all true perception, and to make their reasoning the most pitiable folly. They are going to have a prophet after their own heart, and divine power work at their bidding! From such reception, which was all that the nation as a whole had for the Deliverer, the Lord necessarily withdraws. He goes up into the mountain, Himself alone, type of that ascension where He was before, which is to follow, and to which He presently refers. Meanwhile His disciples are upon the sea, darkness falling, the sea rising under a contrary wind; and such is the world in the absence of Christ for those that follow Him. "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest," and the "course of this world" which has rejected Him is "according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Its being called "the sea of Tiberias" is very significant, the Israelitish city bearing the name of a Roman emperor, the Gentile dominant over those who should have been the people of God, but who are sunk like Jonah in the sea of the nations, even though miraculously preserved.

The "ship" in which the disciples are marks these out as a Jewish remnant, which in fact the disciples were when He left the earth, and will be again when He returns to it (see Notes to Matt., p. 158). The Church proper is seen in Peter stepping out upon the waters to go to Jesus; but this we have not here.

had done, said, This is of a truth that [n]prophet that cometh into the world. Jesus then knowing that they were about to come and take him by force to make him a [o]king, withdrew again into the [p]mountain, himself alone. But when [q]evening came, his disciples went down to the [r]sea, and having entered into a ship, they went over the sea toward Capernaum. And darkness had already come on, and Jesus had not yet come to them. And a [s]strong wind blowing, the sea began to rise. When therefore they had rowed five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they saw Jesus [t]walking upon the sea and drawing near the ship, and they were [u]afraid. But he saith unto them, [v]It is I; be not afraid. Then they desired to take him into the ship; and [w]immediately the ship was at the land whither they were going.

2 (22-71): The confirmation in Christianity.

1 (22-33): food abiding to eternal life.

2. [1] On the morrow, the multitude which stood on the other side of the sea, when they saw that there was no

n ch. 1. 21. ch. 7. 40. *cf.* Deut. 18. 15.
o *cf.* ch. 12. 12-15. *cf.* ch. 2. 23-25.
p *cf.* Lk. 5. 15, 16. *cf.* Acts 3. 21, 22.
q *cf.* ch. 12. 35. *cf.* Rom. 13. 12.
r *cf.* Rev. 17. 15. *cf.* Lk. 21. 25.
s Matt. 8. 24. *cf.* Matt. 24. 29.
t Matt. 14. 22-33. Mk. 6. 47-51. *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8.
u *cf.* Gen. 45. 3; *cf.* Mal. 3. 23. *v* *cf.* Is. 43. 1, 2; *cf.* Song 2. 8-13. *w* *cf.* Ps. 107. 28-31; *cf.* Is. 25. 9, 10.

Only He is seen coming, and they are alarmed, but His word dispels their fear; and when they receive Him into the ship, immediately they are at the land for which they set out. This ends the Jewish part: but which furnishes the principles which are developed and applied in the Lord's words which follow, and in which the thread of John's Gospel with its theme, eternal life, is resumed and carried on.

2. The promises to Israel are confirmed and raised to a higher level in Christianity, and thus become the germs and types of fuller and more wondrous blessings. The world in which we are is the world which has rejected Jesus, and into which, as just said, Israel through unbelief has sunk, and for the meantime lost her place and blessing. Into her place on earth the Church is come, but as a pilgrim and a stranger only, with blessings in a higher sphere. That which is abnormal to Israel, to be a stranger and pilgrim upon earth, is normal to the Church.

[1] The multitude seek for Jesus, in ships that have reached the place of the miraculous supply of food since the disciples left it in the only one there. Jesus had not gone with the disciples, that they know; but they follow the disciples to the city of His adoption, Capernaum, and to their astonishment find Him there. They ask Him in astonishment "when"—which involves the question, "how—He got there." But He has no reply to that; only a rebuke for the motive which made them follow Him. It was not because they saw signs: that is, not because they had realized the significance of His miracles. Had they done so, they would have been brought by them into the presence of God; and He would have got His place in their souls. But it was not so: they had but eaten of the loaves and been filled! Food that perisheth for the life that passeth: that was all that they were in pursuit of; let them work rather for the food that abideth, and that ministers to a life which is eternal. What a contrast between these!

He does not yet say that He Himself is the bread of life. He would, as with the woman of Samaria, fix their eyes upon the imperishable and eternal, and wake up in them heart-hunger after these. Till they had this, all else would be a riddle which they would not even care to solve. But He tells them that this food the Son of man would give them, not now the Son of God. As Creator He could by the mere act of His will furnish abundantly what this life required; but the food of eternal life only the Son of man could give them: for that, He must *become* the Son of man; man, in unique humanity; amid all the sons of men, *the* Son of man. What a difference between the work of creation, with all

other ship there save that into which the disciples had entered, and that Jesus had not [x]gone with his disciples into the ship, but that the disciples had gone away alone, (howbeit there came ships from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they had eaten the bread when the Lord had given thanks,) when therefore the multitude saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves entered into the ships and came to Tiberias, [y]seeking Jesus. And when they found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither? Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye [z]saw signs, but because ye ate of the loaves

x *cf.* ch.16.5, 6.

y *cf.* Mk. 1. 37.

z *cf.* ver. 2. *ctr.*ch.2.11.

its display of wisdom, power and goodness, and the amazing self-sacrifice of redemption by a Son of man!

The Lord does not, and could not say, "Work for the *life*," but for the "*food*" of the life. The life itself is the fundamental, primary gift which alone makes possible any right working. The dead cannot work into life, but the Lord quickens by His voice, as we have seen. Here we are in another line of things, and there is something for man to do, though he cannot give himself life. When they take Him to mean working *works*, He tells them that God's work—the thing He wanted them to do—was to "believe on Him whom He had sent." But they had been "working" to get that food with which He had fed them; and, great as was the miracle, the food itself was but that of the earthly life. Ah, if they would take the same pains, if they would show the same eagerness, to get the bread of life eternal. He who had given them the one had been appointed and accredited of God with the seal of the Spirit (as after His baptism by John) to give them the other. Indeed, the bread itself was sealed and certified to them at the same time, the incorruptible food of an imperishable life; and Gift and Giver were the same blessed Person.

The multitude, however, at once take openly the position of unbelievers. They can ask Him in the face of the miracle what He is working, and then, naturally enough from the standpoint of those who follow Him because they have eaten of the loaves and been filled, point to the sustenance of Israel by the manna forty years in the wilderness as indeed what they might call a proper "sign." The Lord answers that the true bread from heaven is not that which Moses gave, but that which His Father gives, and that is He who cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

There they are brought face to face with that upon which all now depends for them. Eternal life is there for their acceptance or rejection in the Bread of Life, the true Manna, which is Christ Himself. Faith in Him would make them partakers of this precious gift which was not for Israel only but for the world. Wherever the need might be, here was the sufficient supply, free to all that welcomed it. He who had come down from heaven to man sought but for a welcome: how often has He sought in vain!

[2] The response, however, seems at first in this case to be all that one could desire. Like the woman of Samaria, and without exposing their ignorance as she did hers, they ask for the gift of which He had spoken. "Lord," they say, "evermore give us this bread." How like two cases may be that are nevertheless essentially different! and He who "knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man," could not be deceived. Nevertheless, He insists emphatically on the value of the gift: "I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." This is exactly in the line of what He said at Sychar to the woman, and a little fuller, pointing more to the necessity of faith, and to its character, not as mere belief in a fact, but reliance upon a Person, in whom the fulness of satisfaction was to

and were filled. Work not for the food that [a]perisheth, but for that food that abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of man will [b]give you: for him the Father, even God, hath [c]sealed. They said therefore unto him, What should we [d]do that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye [e]believe on him whom he hath sent. They said therefore unto him, What [f]sign then doest thou, that we may see and believe thee? what workest thou? Our [g]fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, according as it is written, [h]Bread from heaven gave he them to eat. Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [i]Moses gave you not the bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the [j]true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who [k]cometh down from heaven and giveth life unto the world.

2 (34-51): conflict, and separation of a remnant drawn to Christ, who expect in faith the portion beyond death, which is annulled for them.

[2] They said therefore unto him, Lord, [l]evermore give us this bread. Jesus said unto them, I am the [m]bread of life: he that cometh unto me shall [n]never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst at all.

a ch.4.13,14. *cf.* Is. 55. 2.
b *cf.* ch.4.10. *cf.*ch.10.28.
c *cf.*ch.10.36. *cf.* Matt. 3. 16, 17.
d *cf.* Lk. 10. 25. *ctr.*Acts16. 30.
e ch.3.14-16. ch. 5. 24. Rom.4.4,5.
f *cf.* ch. 4.48. *cf.*Matt.16. 1-4.
g Ex. 16. 4-36. Nu. 11.7-9.
h Neh. 9.15. Ps.78.23-25.
i *cf.*1 Cor.10. 11. *cf.*Heb.3.5, 6.
j vers.55,58. *cf.*ch. 15. 1.
k vers.50,51. *cf.*1 Cor.10. 16.
l *cf.* ch. 4. 15; m ver. 48; *cf.* Ps. 104. 15; *cf.* Ps. 105. 40. n *cf.* ch. 4. 14; *cf.* ch. 11. 25, 26.

be found. But alas, this insistance upon faith is no good sign for those to whom He is speaking; for where faith is, it does not need to turn in upon itself, and does not grow by self-occupation. Nor does he who hungers and thirsts need to be told that the mere contemplation of a feast will not satisfy, but only the appropriation of it. But here was the feast spread and the welcome and a wonderful assurance: once more, perhaps, as with the parallel saying to the woman, that which may rebuke also the poverty of faith in those who have it, and to understand it we must remember that that first coming to Christ which is once for all, yet implies also a constancy of coming for all needs, an hourly dependence, and a simplicity in taking Him for all; a refusal of all helps to eke out His sufficiency by other means. In this it is that want of truth to Him will make our experience fail in just that measure. Drinking of this world's water we shall thirst again; going to the world for help, like Abraham with his face towards the south, there will come a famine in our own things, even when we would fain enjoy them. A dishonored Christ *will* fail to satisfy. Let us not impute to Him what is due to the dishonor we have done Him. We must take Him for all, to find Him all-sufficient.

But with the crowd now following the Lord there was not even the most rudimentary faith. "I said unto you, that ye have seen Me even and believe not." The work He had done they had to acknowledge, and for this they followed Him; but it was their bodies that got the food; they had known neither spiritual hunger nor supply. They had seen Him (as declared in the miracle), but they had not believed. And such is man universally: what hope, then, as to any? The answer given by the Lord is, There is hope in God alone: "All that the Father giveth Me will come to Me"; there is not merely hope, therefore, but certainty that, spite of all the opposition of the human heart to God, Christ shall not lose that which divine love in Him has sought. How fully sure is it then that He can add, "And him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." To reject the gift of His Father's love would be indeed an impossibility. Even in this, that oneness of His will with the Father's which He has before asserted, displays itself: "For I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." The love that is in His heart towards men works in absolute conformity to the Father's will; and necessarily, for

But I said unto you, that ye have [o]seen me even, and believe not. All that the Father [p]giveth me will come to me, and him that cometh unto me I will in [q]no wise cast out. For I am come down from heaven, not that I might do mine [r]own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the [s]will of him that sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should [t]raise it up at the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that every one who seeth the Son and [u]believeth on him should have eternal life, and I should raise him up at the last day.

o ver. 26. ch. 12. 37.
p vers. 44, 45. *cf.* ch. 17.2, 6, 9. *cf.* Acts 13. 48.
q *cf.* Matt. 11. 28. *cf.* Lk. 15.2. *cf.* Is. 1. 18.
r ch. 5. 30. *cf.* Heb. 10. 5–10.
s vers. 39, 40. *cf.* 1 Tim. 2. 4.
t vers. 40, 44, 54; *cf.* ch. 11. 24-27; *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 20-23. u ch. 5. 24; *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 9-13.

"God is love," and therefore the will of God is the activity of Love itself. Father and Son are in absolute unity, therefore, here: the Son devoting Himself to carry out the salvation which is of God for man. "And this," He adds, "is the will of Him that sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day." Resurrection has thus to come in for the fulfilment of what He is speaking of. Israel rejecting Him, as He sees in the crowds that are now about Him, the Kingdom which had been announced as at hand would be delayed, and faith might have to wait for the accomplishment of what it sought in resurrection. And in any case, resurrection must come in at the "last day" (the close of Israel's age of law), and before the Kingdom. Death must be swallowed up in victory (Isa. xxv. 8) or how much would be lost! and He it is who must accomplish this.

He repeats this immediately, only in a somewhat stronger way, that "this is the Father's will, that whosoever seeth the Son and believeth on Him should have eternal life, and He would raise him up at the last day." This is surely not meant to set aside the duty of watching for the Lord, on the part of believers of that time, nor to say, therefore, that all would necessarily die, to be raised up. The quickening of the mortal body (Rom. viii. 11), in the case of those who are alive when the Lord comes, brings into the complete likeness of the risen saint, and is an action of the same character as resurrection. For His present purpose it was not needful to distinguish between them. Israel's seeing and *not* believing on Him was to be made the occasion of the call of a people characteristically heavenly, and to this the words before us point.

But the Jews murmur at the greatness of His claim. To them He is but the son of Joseph: they know, as they think, both His father and His mother; and how then can He say He has come down from heaven? Jesus only replies that, except the Father draw him, no one can come to Him; and such an one He will raise up at the last day. Then He explains that this drawing is by divine enlightenment, as the prophets had spoken of being taught of God. Every one who had heard from the Father and learned of Him came to Jesus. And yet, on the other hand, no one had actually seen the Father but Himself, who was of Him.

Thus man with his back to the light walks in his own shadow, with God unknown; and God has to pursue him with that unwelcome light, make him to realize his condition and his need of Jesus, that he may find the unseen Father in the Son. Here, then, the bread of life—the means of eternal life—is found. Those who ate the manna in the desert nevertheless died. For him who eats of the true heavenly bread, there is no real death: he will live forever. The lost knowledge of God, the moral link with Him, has been restored; and this is a life which so possessed will endure. The estrangement from God, which brought in death—which is in itself death—is over. Divine life—the divine nature—is in him who by faith in Christ is reconciled to God.

But for this another thing is needed, which the Lord now goes on to, and which the manna fails even to represent. The bread from heaven it does, Christ

The Jews therefore [v]murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread that came down from heaven. And they said, [w]Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how then* doth he say, I am come down from heaven? Jesus answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. [x]No one can come to me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, [y]And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father and learned [of him] cometh unto me. Not that any one hath [z]seen the Father, save he who is of God, he hath seen the Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that [a]believeth on me hath eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your [b]fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead; this is the [c]bread that cometh down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the [d]living bread that came down from heaven: if any one have eaten of this bread, he shall [e]live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my [f]flesh which I will give for the life of the world.

[3] The Jews therefore contended with one another, saying, [g]How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

*Some read, "now."

v *cf.* vers.52, 61. *ctr.* vers.67-69.
w Matt. 13. 55, 56. *ctr.*2 Cor.5. 16.
x *cf.* ch. 7.15, 27, 41, 42.
cf. ch. 12. 32.
cf. Jer.31.3. *cf.*Eph.2.8.
y Is. 54. 13. Jer. 31. 34. ver. 37.
z ch. 1. 18. ch. 7. 29.
a ch. 3. 36.
b *cf.* Nu. 14. 26-29.
c vers.33,35.
d *cf.*ch.5.25, 26.
e *cf.* Gen. 3. 22. *cf.* ch. 4. 14.
f vers.53-56. *cf.* ch. 1. 14 with Heb. 10. 10.
g ver. 41. ch. 3. 4.

3 (52-58): the peace-offering by which we dwell in Christ and Christ in us.

in humiliation, in the wilderness of the world; yet abiding as the "*hidden* manna"—the manna preserved in the ark—for the land also; like the bread that abideth to eternal life. But now the manna fails to represent that which we find in the "bread of God," which now assumes a sacrificial character: "the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

[3] Immediately there is a a clamor again. "The Jews"—who are probably here, as they are more distinctly in the next chapter, the Judeans, in contrast with the Galilcans, and always His bitterest adversaries—"the Jews therefore contended with one another, saying, How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" There were with them no spiritual needs to make them infer a spiritual meaning, and the Lord does not explain. We shall find presently that when He does so, it has no effect in preventing many even of His professing disciples dropping off from Him. Here He only insists the more on the truth and necessity of what He is declaring. With another of His strong affirmations, He carries His statement further than before, and gives it fuller emphasis: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you: he that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is truly food, and my blood is truly drink."

They were accustomed to such figurative speech; and the words would not sound as if they had been spoken elsewhere than in that eastern land. Moreover the impossibility of taking them literally would seem apparent, while the sacrificial system of the law would naturally suggest the thought of reference to it in the words of Christ. But to drink the blood of the offering was in entire opposition to the law, which forbade the drinking of *any* blood. Yet the giving His flesh for the life of the world, of which He had spoken, could be nothing else but sacrificial, while the feeding upon the flesh by any other than the priests could only apply to the peace-offering.

Our Christian knowledge enables us easily to put by the side of our Lord's words passages from the Old Testament history, the prophets and the psalms,

Jesus said therefore unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [h]Except ye have eaten the flesh of the Son of man, and drunk his blood, ye have no life in you: [i]he that feedeth on my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will [j]raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is [k]truly food, and my blood is truly drink. He that feedeth on my flesh and drinketh my blood [l]abideth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by [m]reason of the Father, so he that feedeth on me shall live by reason of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven: not as your fathers ate the manna and [yet] [n]died; he that feedeth on this bread shall live for ever.

h *ctr.* Lev. 17. 10.
i *cf.* ver. 40. *cf.* Jer. 15. 16. *cf.* Rom. 10. 10.
j *cf.* 1 Thess. 4. 14-16.
k *cf.* ver. 32. *cf.* Rom. 5. 8, 9. *cf.* Heb. 9. 22.
l ch. 15. 4, 5. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 6, 28.
m *cf.* ch. 5. 26, 30. *cf.* ch. 17. 4.
n ver. 58; *cf.* Heb. 3. 16-19; *cf.* Deut. 2. 14, 15.

which should have helped the listeners to understand their application. In their own Targums stands recorded their own interpretation Messianically (partially, at least) of Isa. liii. and Ps. xxii. and xl., besides much else. But the conclusion was unwelcome to their unhumbled pride, and Christ crucified was "to the Jew a stumbling-block." Let us turn from them to consider for ourselves what His words mean.

Appropriating faith could hardly be more vividly pictured than in the eating and drinking of Christ's flesh and blood. The Supper of the Lord has kept continually before us the language here, which ritualism would spoil by insisting upon a real partaking in a so-called "sacrament" of a living instead of a dead Christ. Its being His death in which at His table we remember Him takes away the whole foundation of a doctrine which debases and carnalizes what is of the deepest spiritual import. We need not take it up here where we are warned on every side that it cannot be an ordinance of which the Lord is speaking when He says, "Except ye eat and drink, ye have no life in you," any more than when on the other hand He says, "He that eateth and drinketh hath eternal life." The ordinance speaks of that of which the words speak; and the truth is symbolized in act there, and in words here.

Let us note that on the one side, if we eat not we have *no* life,—nothing that can properly be called that: if we have eaten we have eternal life: *eternal* life or no spiritual life at all: that is what the Lord's "verily, verily" affirms.

Moreover, He is speaking of life *in* you: the eternal life is therefore *in* you; otherwise it would be saying, if you eat not you have no life in you, while yet, if you eat, you still have no life in you: which would be, of course, too incongruous to maintain.

Christ's flesh is given for the life of the world, and here the flesh and blood are apart: this is a sacrificial death, in which, according to the law, the blood was carefully poured out before the flesh was either burned or eaten. There was an exception to this, when the sin-offering was burned outside the camp; but this is the peace-offering; which, while it does not go so fully into the work of atonement, dwells more upon the effect of it. The passover had this character, where the whole household fed upon that the blood of which was on the door-posts. Accordingly it is the "passover, the feast of the Jews," which was at hand when these words were spoken.

The difference between the flesh and blood is evident. The "blood is the life"; and "it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul." Thus it speaks of the work accomplished, as only in death could it be accomplished; while the flesh is the victim that has died; in type, the Person of the Lord Himself. Thus the Person is first dwelt upon, the Bread from heaven; and then "the bread which I will give is My flesh."

The drinking the blood is characteristic of Christianity, as compared with that which was before it. The work is known and entered into, with its blessed

4 (59-71): carnalizing of His words by which disciples fall away.

4 These things he said in the synagogue as he taught in Capernaum. Many of his [o]disciples, when they heard [this] said, This saying is a hard one: who can hear him?* But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples murmured at this, said to them, Doth this [p]offend you? [what] then if ye see the Son of man [q]ascending where he was before? It is the [r]Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the [s]words I have spoken to you are spirit and are life. But there are [t]some of you that believe not. For Jesus [u]knew from

*Or "it."

o vers.64,66. cf.Matt.16. 21-23.
p cf.1 Cor.1. 23.
cf.1 Pet.2.8.
q ch. 3. 13.
cf.Matt.26. 63, 64.
cf.ch.16.10.
r cf. 2 Cor.3. 6.
cf. ch.3.5,6.
s ver. 68.
cf. ch. 17.8.
cf.Acts5. 20.
t ver. 36.
u ch.2.24,25. ch. 13. 11.

effect as bringing us to God. Death has become the sustenance of Life. It is not however of the present power of resurrection of which the Lord speaks here, but of going on to it as that in which our portion is. Christ having gone out of the world by death, and we having entered into the fellowship of His death, we wait to be with Him.

Of this identification of ourselves with Him, and of Himself with us He goes on to speak. His flesh is truly food, His blood is truly drink. The food we take becomes by assimilation part of our very selves; and this wondrous food which has in it the true and eternal life (we being the dead and it the living) works "contrary to nature" to assimilate us to itself. Thus we abide in Him and He in us: Christ makes us His own, and then lives in us as His own.

He compares with this even His own human life as sent of the Father. As Man, He thus lived by reason of the Father, the Father's will being that which He was here to carry out. Even so with him in whom Christ as received by him abides, he lives by reason of Christ: Christ it is who is the explanation of his life, its thought and purpose. This is a life which is true life, a life therefore over which hangs no shadow of death: it abides for ever.

4 But even to many of His disciples this was a hard saying, and they stumbled at it. They were thinking of the "Kingdom and glory," and wanted nothing of the "Kingdom and patience" which must precede it. To eat and drink into His death, whatever this might mean, was not the fulfilment of their carnal expectations. They had in truth no heart to inquire further, and stopped at the mere letter and the flesh. The Lord assures them therefore, He was going up where He was before. As to what He had been saying, the flesh could profit nothing; the Spirit of God alone could give life, and His words were spiritual—suited to the work of the Spirit—and quickening where He wrought. But some of them had no receptive power—no faith; and here He spoke with the consciousness which had been ever present with Him, of who it was that believed not, and how unbelief would end in apostasy and betrayal. He could find no hope but in that love-gift of the Father, of which He had spoken, and which assured Him of a people that should come to Him.

Thus He was prepared for rejection; and they took Him at His word, and rejected Him. "Upon this many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him." Such was the dropping off that He had reason to turn even to the twelve and ask, Were they going too? Faith in Simon Peter answered for the rest, there was no other to whom to go: it was, and so it has remained. Christ or none at all! And for those for whom it is so there are "words of eternal life" which are found with Him; all the more surely that, as they are unacceptable to carnal men: words which in their unearthly purity proclaim indeed the "Holy One of God."

Peter speaks for them all, but they are not in fact united in the same testimony: for now as the truth develops, and the light shines amid the darkness, the darkness gathers strength in opposition to it. This seems to be the time when in the defection going on among professed disciples, the heart of Judas

the beginning who they were that believed not; and who it was that would deliver him up. And he said, On this account I said unto you, that no one can come unto me, except it be [v]given him of the Father. Upon this many of his disciples [w]went back, and walked no more with him. Jesus therefore said unto the twelve, Will ye [z]also go away?* Simon [y]Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go away? thou hast words of eternal life; and we have [z]believed and know that thou art the [a]Holy One of God. Jesus answered them, Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a [b]devil? He spake of Judas [the son] of Simon, Iscariot: for he it was who should deliver him up, being one of the twelve.

v vers.44,45.
w *cf.* ver.60. *cf.* Acts 7. 39, 51.
x *cf.* Lk. 14. 25–35. *cf.* ch.10.26–28.
y *cf.* Matt. 16. 16–19. *cf.* Lk. 5. 8.
z *cf.* ch.11.27. *cf.* ch. 1. 41, 42.
a *cf.* Acts 2. 27. *cf.* Mk.1.24.
b ch. 13. 18. ch. 17. 12. *cf.* Acts 1. 25.

SECTION 3. (Chaps. vii.–viii. 1.)

The Spirit in the believer the manifestation of the glory of the unknown Christ.

1 (1-9): Alone because of faithfulness, till His appointed time.

1. AND after these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Judea because they of Judea† sought to [c]kill him. Now the feast of the Jews was near, [which is] the [d]Tabernacles. His

c ch. 5.16,18.
d *cf.* Lev.23. 33-36. *cf.* Num.29. 12, etc. *cf.* Ezr. 3.4. *cf.* Zech.14. 16-19.

* The form of the question indicates a negative answer is expected.
† Same word as for "Jews," but here distinguishing from Galileans.

begins to conceive its first malignant schemes of hostility to the Lord. His character is at least now formed as what the Lord declares him to be, a "false accuser"—a "devil." The seed of the betrayal has already taken root within him.

Sec. 3.

The connection between this section and the last is very evident. As we have already seen, life being so largely the subject matter in this gospel, the Spirit of God is necessarily connected with this as the Communicator and power of the life. Thus in the first subdivision we had life in the first two sections, and in the third the Spring of living water; in the present one, we have had in like manner life in the first two sections, and now, in the third, we have again the living water: but it is here not simply springing up within the believer, but pouring out from him in the world "rivers of living water." The world at large is not changed by it, but an oasis is created in the desert, a prophecy of what is yet to come for the whole world.

Thus the feast that brings the Lord at this time to Jerusalem is the feast of tabernacles, Israel's joyful celebration in the land of her wanderings past, and with which the blessing of the earth is concurrent. But this has not come, and He who can alone bring it in for them is rejected by His own. Thus He goes up only to substitute as it were Pentecost for Tabernacles. The blessing is greater and of a higher order than anything the latter can show, but it is individual, not national; and still less world-wide.

For the blessing itself implies a Christ no longer present among men, but, according to the words which we have just heard uttered, "gone up where He was before." We have heard too by what way. Death has come on Him on whom it had no claim: a voluntary, sacrificial death, and His glory for ever; but the sign also of His rejection by men, a rejection which would even have been complete, had not the Father's gift secured a people to His Son. Thus then we have been brought to where we are doctrinally in the present chapter: the world still rejecting Him; the Father acting for the glory of the Son; the Spirit manifested in the world itself in those who have believed on Jesus, the Witness of His unseen glory: these are the characteristics of that to which we have now come.

1. The state of the world is that which is first revealed, the Lord Himself in

brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence and go into Judea, that thy [e]disciples also may behold thy works which thou doest. For no one doeth anything in secret, and seeketh himself to be known openly. If thou doest these things, [f]manifest thyself to the world. For [g]neither did his brethren believe in him. Jesus therefore saith unto them, My [h]time is not yet come; but your time is always ready. The world [i]cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it that its works are evil. Go ye up unto the feast; I go not up [yet]* unto this feast, because my time is not yet fulfilled. And having said these things unto them, he abode still in Galilee.

2 (10-36): Diverse opposition
1 (10-18): His knowledge and the way of knowledge the will to obey.

2. [1] But when his brethren had gone up unto the feast, then also he himself went up, not openly, but as it were in [j]secret. They of Judea then sought him at the feast, and said, Where is that man? And there was a great [k]murmuring among the multitudes concerning him. Some said, He is a [l]good man; and others said, Nay, but he leadeth the multitude [m]astray. However no one spake openly about him for [n]fear of those of Judea.

e *cf.* ch.6.66. *cf.* ch. 2. 11.
f *cf.* ch.14.22 with ch.17. 16.
g *cf.* Mk. 3. 21. *cf.* Rom. 9. 5, 6.
h ch. 2. 4. vers.8,30.
i ch. 15. 19. *cf.* 1 Jno. 3. 13.
j *cf.* ch. 6.15. *cf.* Matt.12. 16-20.
k *cf.* ch.6.41.
l vers.40,41. Matt.21.46.
m *cf.* Lk.23. 2, 14. *cf.* Matt.27. 63.
n ch. 9. 22. ch.12.42,43.

* Many omit.

what complete solitude in the midst of it, without sympathy even from His human kindred, and the professing people of God only to be classed with the world: going on indeed with their feasts, the empty forms of a piety which for the mass does not exist, and which have become therefore the signs of hardness and levity of heart. What a witness against them is that history of divine deliverances which their feast of tabernacles commemorates, while those who are especially the clusterers round the holy places then, "they of Judea," are specially marked out here as those in open and deadly hostility to the Lord of life, the Son of Him they worship.

The Lord therefore does not go up at first, or openly, to the feast. He is neither Lord there, nor even welcome Guest. Nor is the time come for His open manifestation to the world, which hates Him for His faithfulness. Thus He abides solitary in His unique and perfect Manhood among men estranged from Him by His perfection.

2. [1] At the feast contradictory murmurings are heard about Him, some for, some against; suppressed however by the fear of those of Judea, who in all decisions concerning questions of authority and teaching had the upper hand. In the middle of the feast, Jesus who had come up privately to it, appeared in the temple and with the authority that belonged to Him, began to teach. Amazed at the knowledge which plainly He had not acquired at the ordinary schools of rabbinic learning, which it in no wise resembled, they inquire how He has come by it. He answers that His doctrine is not His own, but His who sent Him. He has not learned of men, nor put forth what was simply of His own mind; but what He taught He had learned of the Father in that abiding intercourse with Him in which He lived (chap. viii. 28). And He adds that they too might know for themselves whether His doctrine were of God, or of a man's mind merely. They would know this, if they were but willing to do the Father's will: for the spirit of obedience clears out of the soul the earth-vapors that obscure the heavens; he who has not heart-felt desire for the truth will scarcely learn it.

This is itself simple, if only we believe that God can certify the truth to His creatures, and that He cares enough for them to desire that they should have it.

But when it was now the middle of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and [o]taught. They therefore of Judea wondered, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never [p]learned? Jesus therefore answered them and said, My doctrine is [q]not mine, but his who sent me. If any one [r]willeth to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself. He that speaketh from himself seeketh his [s]own glory; but he that seeketh his glory who sent him, he is true, and there is no unrighteousness in him.

2 (19-24): the double witness of the law against His adversaries.

[2] Did not [t]Moses give you the law? and [u]none of you keepeth the law: why do ye seek to [v]kill me? The multitude answered, Thou hast a [w]demon: who seeketh to kill thee? Jesus answered and said unto them, I

o ver. 28. *cf.* Matt. 5. 1, 2, etc. *cf.* ver. 46.
p cf. Matt. 7. 28, 29. *cf.* Acts 4. 13.
q ch. 8. 28. ch. 12. 49. ch. 3. 34.
r cf. ch. 8. 43. *cf.* Matt. 21. 23-27. *cf.* Ps. 25. 9.
s ch. 5. 41. ch. 8. 50. *cf.* Gal. 1. 10.
t ch. 1. 17. *cf.* Rom. 2. 17-29.
u cf. Rom. 3. 19.
v ver. 1.
w ch. 8. 48, 52; *cf.* Matt. 12. 24.

But, simple as it is, if we believe it, what does it reveal with regard to the condition, not of the world merely, but of the children of God to-day? The various and conflicting views of Christians as to almost every Christian truth, how are they to be accounted for, with the Bible open before us, and the Spirit of truth to lead us into all truth? What heart-searching should it not give us, to learn how far we are really willing to have the truth—the whole truth, at whatever cost.

Another test the Lord gives here: "He that speaketh from himself seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh His glory who sent him, *he* is true, and there is no unrighteousness in him." This is a personal test, as the other was the doctrinal. And here was the double witness to the glorious Speaker: who but Himself could have faced the application of these by the watchful multitudes that were around Him?

[2] He turns now openly upon His adversaries, to warn them how thoroughly the law to which they clung witnessed against them. He charges them plainly with their murderous designs upon His life; a charge which the Galileans, ignorant of what the Judeans were meditating, impute to the diseased fancies of a demoniac. The Lord goes back to the miracle which had aroused their malignant animosity. Circumcision, though incorporated by Moses in the law he gave, was yet not what came from Moses but from the fathers; it had another character, in fact, from law, as connected with those through whom God in His grace gave them the promises. Thus circumcision itself is by the apostle afterwards (Rom. iv. 11) shown to be the seal of the righteousness of faith in Abraham; and he receives it when his body is now dead and fruit from him naturally impossible, the very time of its reception thus corresponding with its spiritual meaning. This circumcision then, belonging to a period before law, and in its meaning the very opposite, is by the law itself preferred to the law,—that is, the commandment of the sabbath. Thus grace had, by the law itself, precedence above the law.

Now the impotent man was healed by the selfsame grace, his body now dead like Abraham's. Grace, not law, had had the priority in divine order, as was evident; and law, as an incompatible thing, could not be added to grace when it did come (see Gal. iii. 19–26), but came to make man's need of grace apparent. Sickness and death having come in through sin, only grace could heal the impotent; and this we have seen to be the principle which the miracle in all its details discloses. "Take up thy bed and walk" asserts the superiority of grace to law, as did the circumcision of a man upon the sabbath day. No doubt it required, as the Lord shows here, not to judge according to the appearance; but this is the true judicial spirit, and always necessary for righteous judgment.

have done [x]one work, and ye all wonder. On this account Moses gave you [y]circumcision (not that it is of Moses, but of the fathers), and ye on the [z]sabbath circumcise a man. If a man receive circumcision on the sabbath, that the law of Moses may not be broken, are ye angry with me because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath? Judge not according to [a]appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

[3] (25-31): the secret of their condition manifested.

[3] Some of those of Jerusalem said therefore, Is not this he whom they seek to kill? and lo, he speaketh openly, and they say nothing to him. Have the rulers indeed recognized that this man is the Christ? But we [b]know this man whence he is; and when the Christ cometh [c]none knoweth whence he is. Jesus therefore cried out, teaching in the temple and saying, Ye both know me, and know [d]whence I am; and I am not come of myself, but he that [e]sent me is true, whom ye [f]know not. *I* know him: for I am from him, and *he* hath sent me. They sought therefore to take him; but no one laid hand on him, because his [g]hour had not yet come. And many of the multitude believed on him, and said, [h]When the Christ cometh, will he do more signs than this man hath done?

[4] (32-36): their failure, and the change impending.

[4] The Pharisees heard the multitude murmuring these

x ch.5.10-16.
y Lev. 12. 3 with Gen. 17. 12-14.
z *cf.* Matt. 12. 4-8.
a ch. 8. 15. *cfr.* Is.11.3, 4.
b *cf.* vers.40-43. *cf.* ch. 6. 42.
c *cf.* ch.8.14, 19. *cf.* Mal.3.1.
d *cf.* Matt. 21. 38. *cf.*ch.12.37-43.
e ver. 16.
f *cf.* ch.1.18. *cf.* ch. 8. 42, 55.
g ver. 6. *cf.* ch. 17. 1 with Lk. 22. 53.
h *cf.*ch.4.25, 26. *cf.*Matt.12. 23.

[3] Again there is a stir among the crowd at His boldness, and on the part of some of Jerusalem, who know full well what is in the hearts of the rulers with regard to Him, an expression of astonishment that they do not interfere. Could it be possible, they ask each other, that a revulsion of mind has come, and that the rulers are beginning to recognize this Man as the Christ? But no: surely that were impossible; they knew Him and His origin, and there was no room for such mystery as they expected to attach to the coming of Messiah. Evidently to them He was but the simple Galilean, the Nazarene; and all that had taken place at Bethlehem and Jerusalem had slipped entirely out of unretentive minds which cared too little to retain it. While they were murmuring such things, the voice of Him of whom they were speaking penetrated to them where they were, not to assert His birth in David's city or of David's line, nor to recall the vision of angels and the quest of the magi, graved in the hearts of many by the slaughter of the babes. Nay, He allows that they know Him in their mere external way (for of nothing else were they speaking) sufficiently: He did not propose to supplement that knowledge, which for them would still be ineffectual. That which they needed to know He had already declared, and the way to know it, but they recognized not divine truth, nor therefore His divine mission. He was from God; but they knew not that God from whom He was.

And still the hand of God kept back the angry outburst that was ready to break out against Him: Master of all circumstances till the appointed hour when He would yield Himself to the divine will which He came to accomplish. Moreover those quiet penetrating words were gaining ground with many of the multitude, who were asking if, when Christ came, He could be expected to do more signs than the Man they were refusing had already done.

[4] A more direct effort to take Him is the result of this, the chief priests and Pharisees sending officers to apprehend Him. The Lord, with perfect understanding of all that is going on, tells them that it needs not: He is going away —back to Him who had sent Him into the world. Days would come when at last in vain they would seek Him; and into that place into which He was going

things concerning him; and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent [i]officers to take him. Jesus said therefore, Yet a [j]little while am I with you, and I go to him that sent me. Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me; and [k]where I am *ye* cannot come. They of Judea said therefore among themselves, Whither is this man about to go, that we shall not find him? Is he about to go to the dispersion among the [l]Greeks, and teach the Greeks? What is this thing which he said, Ye shall seek me and shall not find me, and where I am *ye* cannot come?

3 (37-39): The indwelling Spirit manifesting Him.

3. Now in the [m]last day, the great [day] of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any one [n]thirst, let

[i] vers. 45–47. *cf.* ch. 18. 3.
[j] ch. 12. 35, 36.
[k] *cf.* ch. 13. 33. *ctr.* ch. 14. 2, 3. ch. 8. 21.
[l] *cf.* Jas. 1. 1. *cf.* Acts 22. 21, 22.
[m] *cf.* Lev. 23. 34.
[n] Is. 55. 1. *cf.* Rev. 21. 6.

they could never come:—a solemn warning; but which they fling off from them in their scorn. He has indeed spoken of God as the One that sent Him, and then the warning is plain; but they will not have it so. No: He must be going to the dispersed among the Gentiles, and to teach the Gentiles; and this too was to be, though not according to their thought. Little did they realize that Lo-ammi ("not my people") was to be written upon them in the time soon to come, in a sterner fashion than ever yet had been. But beyond, in the place from which He had come, to which He was going to return, there could be no Father's welcome for the rejectors of His Son.

3. He was going away, therefore. "He was in the world, and the world had been made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He had come to His own, and His own received Him not." In that which was considered the chief of their festivals, His voice was heard only as a strange and dissonant sound. He was going away now to where He was before.

The last day, the great day of the feast, had come; and those who had gathered to it from all parts of the world were soon to separate. It was a day of rest and of holy convocation, of gathering, not of scattering; and as an eighth day,* the commencement of a new week, it spoke of eternity, of an eternal reunion, when all servile work should be at an end for ever, sin and its consequences being together put away. It corresponds with this really, that dwelling in booths was only for *seven* days; the eighth speaking of the entrance into the land.

Another ceremony, but which has no authority from Scripture, ceased also on the eighth day,—the pouring out of water drawn from the pool of Siloam. "This," says Lange, "was the celebration of the miraculous springs which God opened for the people on their pilgrimage through the wilderness. But because the eighth day marked their entrance into Canaan, the water-drawing ceased. On this day the springs of the promised land gave their waters to the people: an emblem of the streams of spiritual blessing which Jehovah had promised to His people."

They were still in the land,—a broken remnant of them, under the Gentile domination: and where now were those spiritual streams, the "living waters" that were to "go out from Jerusalem in summer and in winter"? (Zech. xiv. 8). Centuries had come and gone, and there was no sign even yet of the fulfilment. The ceremonies survived, but with the heart-sickness of deferred hope. Seasons of expectancy had passed away, fading quietly into the ordinary vacant dulness, or sometimes crushed out fiercely under an armed heel. Now there was to some the breath of another revival, although the voice of him who had first announced it had been silenced in Herod's prison. But John had given place to a Greater; and signs and wonders that might well be Messianic were waking up expectation from Galilee to Jerusalem. Yet why did He not use

*Edersheim does not regard it as the eighth day, which, he says, "in Rabbinic language was regarded as 'a festival by itself;'" but certainly not in the language of Scripture.

him come to me and drink. He that [o]believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his [p]belly shall flow [q]rivers of living water. But this he said concerning the [r]Spirit, which they that believed on him were about to receive: for [the] Spirit was not [s]yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

o *cf.* ch. 6. 35.
p *ctr.* Lk. 15. 17. *ctr.* Phil. 3. 19. *cf.* Ps. 84. 6.
q *cf.* ch. 4. 14. *cf.* Acts 4. 20.
cf. 2 Cor. 4. 6. r *cf.* ch. 14. 16, 17; *cf.* Acts 2. 4, 33. s *cf.* ch. 16. 7.

His power after another fashion than merely in feeding or healing the multitudes? why did He not rally around Him the strength of Israel, and strike off their fetters?

The booths were gone; the wilderness-journey had come to an end; the eighth day had brought them to the land: with their Messiah in their midst, would not the land, in all the breadth and fulness of the promise to Abraham, be before them now? Yet He had spoken of going away, and to a place inaccessible to those who should seek Him and not find Him. What could all this mean, they must have questioned, many of them in their bewilderment, and found no answer.

But "in the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any one thirst, let him come unto Me and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

"Of those who had heard Him," says Edersheim, "none but must have understood that, if the invitation were indeed real, and Christ the fulfilment of all, then the promise had its deepest meaning, that he who believed on Him would not only receive the promised fulness of the Spirit, but give it forth to the fertilizing of the barren waste around. It was truly the fulfilment of the Scripture-promise, not of one, but of all: that in Messianic times the *Nabhi* (prophet), literally the 'weller forth,' viz. of the divine, should not be one or another select individual, but He would pour out on all His handmaidens and servants of His Holy Spirit, and thus the moral wilderness of this world be changed into a fruitful garden. Indeed, this is expressly stated in the Targum, which thus paraphrases Isa. xliv, 3: 'Behold, as the waters are poured out on arid ground, and spread over the dry soil, so will I give the Spirit of My holiness on thy sons, and blessing on thy children's children.' What was new to them was that all this was treasured up in the Christ, that out of His fulness men might receive, and grace for grace. And yet even this was not quite new."

The interpretation is given by John himself on account of the importance of it: "But this He said concerning the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified."

The fulfilment carries us on to Pentecost, when the Spirit of God came in witness to the glory of the rejected Saviour. And we must not suppose, because of the reference to the Old Testament, that in the manner of its fulfilment there was nothing but what the prophets of old declared. Peter's quotation of Joel at the time when the Spirit came shows how really the promise of our Lord could fulfil the Old Testament prophet. It does not show that there was not a deeper and greater blessing in what took place at Pentecost. The Lord's words here speak of the effect only—"rivers of living water" flowing out of the believer. The evangelist explains that this would follow the reception of the Spirit after Christ should be glorified. And the Lord's previous words assure us that this would be in the day of His absence, not of His presence; although even yet it was assured to them that He would return if only (nationally) they repented. They did not; and the mystery of the Church came gradually out. Of that there is nothing here: all is individual; and even as to the individual, we must connect what is said here with what had been said to the Samaritan woman, before we can understand that the reception of the Spirit means that indwelling presence which is the abiding spring within the man from which these

4 (40-viii. 1): Testing and tested.

4. [Some] of the multitude therefore, having heard these words, said, This is of a truth the [t]prophet. Others said, This is the Christ. But others said, Doth the Christ then come out of [u]Galilee? hath not the Scripture said that the Christ cometh of the seed of [v]David, and from the village of Bethlehem where David was? There came to be a division therefore among the multitude on account of him. And some of them would have taken him, but no one laid hands on him. The officers came therefore to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? The officers answered, [w]Never man spake* like this man. The Pharisees therefore answered them, Are ye also led astray? hath any of the [x]rulers believed on him? or of the Pharisees? But this multitude that knoweth not the law, they are [y]accursed. [z]Nicodemus saith unto them (he that came to him before, being one of them), Doth our law judge a man, except it [a]first hear from him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search and see: for out of [b]Galilee ariseth no prophet.

And they went each one to his house; but Jesus went unto the [c]mount of Olives.

t ch. 6. 14.
u ver. 52. cf. ch. 1.46.
v cf. Jer. 23. 5. cf. Mi. 5. 2. cf. Lk. 2.4-12.
w cf. Matt. 7. 29. cf. ch. 4. 29.
x cf. ch. 12. 41, 42. cf. 1 Cor. 1. 26-29. cf. 1Cor. 2.8. cf. Matt. 11. 25, 26.
y cf. ch. 9.34.
z ch. 3. 1. ch. 19. 39.
a cf. Deut. 1. 17. cf. Prov. 18. 13.
b ver. 41.
c cf. Matt. 26. 30.

*R. V. following a strongly supported text, reads, "Never man so spake," omitting last clause.

"rivers" issue. For the full truth and bearing of the doctrine we must look elsewhere.

But where else shall we find so wonderful a picture of what the man indwelt of the Spirit is in the world as witness of the glory of His rejected Lord? As we have to say of kindred utterances in this Gospel, it seems too highly drawn for a picture of any save the rare exceptions among Christian men. But let us accept the reproof of this, and try rather to realize what a man indwelt of the Spirit would be normally as that. The Spirit of God—God—dwelling within one: the Living Centre of the practical life; the Enlightener of mind and conscience; the Energy of the affections and the will: all power, all wisdom in Him who as Vice-gerent of Christ has come to hold me for Christ against all that in a world opposed to Him would hinder my witness! what competency, what fulness at all times accessible to me does all this imply!

A perpetual spring in a vessel must needs overflow the vessel in which it is, the smallness of which is no limit to the spring itself. When once the vessel is full, all the power of the spring will manifest itself in the overflow. Hence, (*if we think of the spring and not of the vessel,*) "rivers of living water" are not too much to predicate of the outflow from this divine Source of blessing within the soul, which, first filling to complete satisfaction the soul itself, must surely then flow out for the need of others.

This is the Lord's own witness to the gift He gives, who cannot err in the estimate He makes of it. When we realize what it is, we cannot think it to be too high. Our experimental knowledge will depend indeed upon our practical subjection to the Spirit indwelling us; but how blessed to know that this is to be gained in so simple a way, and that this is the picture the Lord can give us of the normal Christian.

4. From this we go back to see the world in which He is, and which does not know Him. Reasonings there are many, and contrary thoughts; false tests,

SUBDIVISION 3. (Chaps. viii. 2–xii.)

Brought to God, in the power of resurrection life.

SECTION 1. (Chap. viii. 2-59.)

The Life the Light.

1 (2-11): Grace and truth.

1. AND early in the morning he came again into the [d]temple, and all the people came to him; and he sat down and taught them. And the scribes and the

d Lk. 21. 38. cf. ch. 18. 20.

and true tests falsely applied; the failure of His enemies to apprehend Him, failure from the timidity of the half-decided, as Nicodemus. Amid all this they scatter away from Him, every one to his own, and leave Him. He, solitary in the world He made, He to His solitude in the mount of Olives.

SUBD. 3.

The third subdivision is very distinctly marked as that, and in a double way: both as bringing into the sanctuary and giving the resurrection character of life as communicated to us by One who is both "the Resurrection and the Life." And these things are very clearly connected together by the fact that only through death could the sanctuary be opened for us, and resurrection is of necessity therefore the way in.

Historically we have not yet come to either; and this part even more distinctly if possible, than the former ones, shows us the anticipative character of the Gospel of John. As already said, there is no rending of the veil in it, as we find it in the Synoptic Gospels: for in John the Word, tabernacling in flesh, displays in Himself divine glory,—"glory as of an Only-begotten with the Father, full of grace and truth." This is what we find in what is before us here: Christ as the Light of the world, Immanuel, the Son of the Father, perfectly one with Him in all to which He testifies, a Light from which the pretentious self-righteousness of the Pharisees is driven out in confusion, while yet a convicted sinner can stand there, because revealed in grace. Grace and truth are found in Him together, and as the Son He gives the freedom of the Father's house.

Thus we begin here with the soul in the light. The second section shows the light in the soul; which makes Christ Himself the Object before it; who, as the Shepherd of the sheep, leads out His own from the Jewish fold of law into enjoyed salvation, liberty and green pastures. But for this the Shepherd must give His life up for the sheep, and these green pastures are in fact on resurrection ground.

This leads therefore to the third section, in which death is met for the believer, and Christ is now the resurrection and the life, Lazarus being here the text of the sermon, as the blind man is in the second section, and the woman taken in adultery in the first. In each case, as we have seen in the impotent man and the miraculous feeding of the multitude, the sermon goes beyond the text.

Sec. 1.

The first section, then, shows us sovereign grace in action, God Himself the only hiding-place of the convicted and condemned, and freedom therefore by the truth. Here where divine grace is so fully displayed, the history of the text is a lamentable illustration of how little that grace is realized by Christians themselves. We have but to take up indeed the writings of some of the earliest "fathers," to discover how soon the glory of its light became dimmed in the professing Church,—how soon the Judaism which combatted the apostle Paul from the beginning had overgrown or displaced the gospel which he preached. We may wonder indeed that it could venture to mutilate Scripture itself in such a manner as the MSS. and versions show has been done in this case; but this is what Augustine, as is well known, in a day little later than the earliest copies, charges against "some of little, or rather enemies to the true faith."

Pharisees bring a woman taken in [e] adultery, and having set her in the midst, they say unto him, Teacher, this woman was taken in the very act, committing adultery. Now in the law [f] Moses commanded to stone such: thou therefore, what sayest thou? But this they said, [g] tempting him, that they might have whereof to

[e] *cf.* ch. 4. 16–18. *cf.* Matt. 5. 27, 28.
[f] Lev. 20. 10. *cf.* Deut. 22. 21, 22.
[g] *cf.* Matt. 19. 3, etc.

We can, in fact, easily understand the motive which would lead to the omission of such a story as is here before us: who could imagine any bold enough to insert it where he did not find it? or the manufacture of so exquisite a piece of forgery as this would be? Indeed, few if any would venture to go quite so far as this. They speak of it rather as of some apostolic tradition, some fragment of true history, not perfectly preserved. They bow it out, in short, regretfully, but in no wise does this compensate for the greatness of the loss.

Of course, I am aware that there are difficulties urged, entirely apart from questions of the text. Thus Edersheim objects: "That a woman taken in the act of adultery should have been brought before Jesus (and apparently without the witnesses to her crime); that such an utterly un-Jewish, as well as illegal procedure should have been that of the 'Scribes and Pharisees'; that such a breach of law, and what Judaism would regard as decency, should have been perpetrated to 'tempt' Him; or that the Scribes should have been so ignorant as to substitute stoning for strangulation, as the punishment of adultery; lastly, that this scene should have been enacted in the temple, presents a veritable climax of impossibilities."

But much of this seems to be misconception merely; the rest a strange pledging oneself to what would be impossible for Scribes and Pharisees to do, mad with disappointed hatred against Christ, and bent upon compassing His destruction. As to the penalty of adultery being strangulation, "Michaelis," says Lange, "has justly denied the authority of the Talmud, and has asserted, on a comparison of Ex. xxxi. 14; xxxv. 2, with Num. xv. 32–35, that the formula 'put to death' generally means stoned. Besides strangulation is frequently used first, only as an alleviation of the prescribed penalty, as in the burning in the middle ages."

As to bringing her for judgment to the Lord, there is no evidence of any formal trial instituted, such as would need the production of witnesses. The appeal is to a prophet who should know the mind of God rather than to a judge, who should decide as to the fact. The case *was* decided according to Moses' law; but were they to act as Moses commanded? Thus the illegality vanishes: they were not setting up a new court, even feignedly; but knowing the grace they cavilled at, they would make Him either act in opposition to this, or come out in opposition to the law itself.

As for their respect for decency or the temple, under the pressure of such an opportunity, they were the children of those who murdered Zacharias, perhaps on the very spot where the Lord was at this time: and it would be scarcely safe to theorize in regard to it.

The narrative is witness to itself in its inimitable beauty and simplicity, its union of holiness and grace. It is witness also in the place in which it stands, as the introduction to the chapter, the key to what follows in it. In all this part of John the doctrine developes out of a narrative,—some miracle or significant thing, the text (as we have called it) of the sermon following. Take the story of the woman away, you will not realize in the same way at all the meaning of what is left, a broken statue without a head. This one can hardly show aright except as we take up the chapter, and therefore we may go on to this at once.

1. The Lord returns from the mount of Olives to the temple, and the people flock around Him. His manifest victory over the rulers on the previous days has discouraged open attempts upon His Person; while all the more it has

accuse him. But Jesus, stooping down, [h]wrote with his finger on the ground. And, as they continued asking him, he lifted himself up, and said unto them, He that is [i]without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the

[h] *cf.* Ex. 31. 18. *cf.* Dan. 5. 5, 25-28.

[i] *cf.* Rom. 2. 1, 22.

shown the necessity of some bold stratagem to make Him commit Himself in the eyes of the people as an offender against the law, for which they were zealots. It was just the time for such an effort as we find here, which if it were in some respects extreme, only made manifest the more the extremity to which they had been brought. As against the Friend of publicans and sinners also, their plot was well conceived. He had dared, as they murmured, to assume the prerogative of God in forgiving sins, and would evidently not be intimidated from the course He was pursuing by any fear of consequences. Yet He had not as yet ventured to pronounce the pardon of one openly condemned by Moses' law. Here was a new case therefore for Him to decide, in which He might easily come into collision with it. Did He not go after that which was lost until He found it? They would bring one lost indeed to Him, and see if He would take the burden of such: "a woman taken in adultery, in the very act!" The law had decided what was to be done: would He venture to annul its sentence? But if not, His reception of sinners must receive some modification; if He did—as they surely rather hoped—His followers would have to make open choice between Him and Moses, and the crowd would certainly drop off from Him.

The temptation is obvious, and they had much reason to expect success. Had He not in His sermon on the mount contrasted His own sayings with those of the ancients? And perhaps they had already heard such a saying as that "the law and the prophets were until John." Such things, doubtless exaggerated and multiplied by common rumor, would encourage them in their hope, as they came forward with their appeal to the Teacher for His judgment. Their surprise must have been great when, instead of answering them, "Jesus, stooping down, wrote with His finger on the ground." The common version adds: "As though He heard them not;" and others have given a similar interpretation. But He could not have *repeated* such an action with such a meaning. On the contrary, though we have nothing of any words which might be written, it is plainly the sentence itself which they are to find in the ground. But they do not understand Him, and as they continue asking, He lifts Himself up at last, and faces them.

No: He does not reverse Moses' sentence; let it be carried out: only let there be spotless hands to execute it. "Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone at her." The sentence of the law is right: yes! but on whom really is the sentence of the law? who shall escape it, if it be strictly applied? Manifestly, it is as a teacher, not a judge, that He is answering. They might say, Is law and order to come to a stand-still, because there are no spotless hands to execute it? Plainly not: nor, if the Lord were speaking as a judge, would it seem to have been in place to require any such thing. The judge in a given case has to do with the accused, and not with the executioner. But the Lord distinctly refuses to take such a place in Israel: "Man," He says to one who would have put Him in it, "who made Me a judge or a divider over you?" But if, as here, He is appealed to as a teacher, He will answer as a teacher; and then very differently. In this character, it is with the *appellants* that He has first of all to do, and not directly with the accused; and this is accordingly His course at this time. They would exhibit Him as one in opposition to Moses; He makes them realize that He alone it is who understands Moses, and uses the law with them for the purpose for which it was given, making them feel the sharp edge of its universal condemnation, in order that they may realize their need of that grace at which they cavil, and which He had come to declare and minister to men. "He that was without sin" was indeed the man the law was

ground. But they, having heard that, [j]went out one by one, beginning with the elder ones until the last; and Jesus was left [k]alone, and the woman, where she was, in the midst. And Jesus lifted himself up and seeing none but the woman, said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath [l]no one condemned thee? And she said, No one, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, [m]Neither do I condemn thee: go thy way; hencefore [n]sin no more.*

*From vii. 53–viii. 11 is omitted in many ancient MSS., sometimes placed elsewhere; and many differences are found in the text.

[j] *cf.* ch.3.20.
[k] *cf.* ch.9.34, 35. *cf.* Ps. 51.4.
[l] *cf.* Ex.11.7. *cf.* 1Cor.4.3.
[m] *cf.* Rom. 4. 7, 8. *cf.* Rom. 8. 33, 34.
[n] *cf.* Lk.7.48–50. *cf.* Tit.2.11, 12.

seeking. For the lack of finding one, the death it threatened brooded over all; and none could see the face of God and live. Here was the first thing they needed to realize, in order to know the joy of that open face of God, which revealed in grace in the Person of the Son, brought life instead of death—*eternal* life.

"And again He stooped down, and wrote upon the ground." There it was indeed that man's sentence was written: that ground out of which man was taken, to which he must return,—dust to dust. Was that sentence upon the woman merely? Was it only upon the gross transgressor? There was the law's settlement of the question: "the man that doeth them shall live in them"; "the soul* that sinneth it shall die." Ah, yes: if the glory of God were in the face of Moses, *they* could not look upon it there: grace was the sinner's only refuge; it was theirs.

But they will not bow themselves to this. They stand in the light convicted, but only to flee out of it into the covering darkness. "And they, having heard that, went out one by one, beginning with the elder ones until the last; and Jesus was left alone, and the woman where she was in the midst."

Thus the attack has failed; the would-be accusers are silenced; they leave behind them even the sinner herself: it has become impossible for them to touch her. On her part, she remains: the light which they have found so intolerable reveals no more as to her than she has known already. Guilty, lost, she was and is: the retreat of her accusers has not altered that; to what it has left her as yet she knows not. *He* has not reversed Moses's law, whose words have yet inexplicably for the moment freed her. To herself He has not yet spoken. What will He say—what can He—with whom there is an authority that can make the leaders of the people bend and give way before it? Now she hears His voice again, and to herself, questioning, "Where are those thine accusers? has no one condemned thee?" And she says, "No one, Lord." He says again: "Neither do I condemn thee: go thy way; henceforth sin no more."

Now we cannot say what, or if any work, was wrought in the woman's soul. She utters no word which would entitle us to say that there was faith in her to lay hold of the grace that there was in Him for the chief of sinners. On His part He says nothing as to forgiveness of sins or of salvation. He has not come to judge the world, but to save the world. If the judges in Israel throw up her case, therefore, she is free. It is a great deliverance for her, and may be the type and prelude of one far greater. But the question as to this that remains does not at all affect the truth as presented to us here of God revealed in grace in the Person of the Son, in whom every soul hopelessly condemned and guilty may find refuge. Grace and truth are in Christ Jesus, and the Life is the Light of men. Whether she availed herself of it or not, on His side the sanctuary was opened; and in a world where righteousness was not,—where those who would claim it had to retire abashed and confounded from the presence of Him who for

*That is, "the person": a common use of the word soul in Scripture, and which is still preserved to our day. See for the argument as to the death-penalty of the law the notes on Exodus xxxiv. 1-7.

2 (12-20): The Father and Son their fellowship in testimony.

2. Jesus therefore spake again unto them, saying, I am the °light of the world: he that followeth me shall in no wise walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest witness concerning thyself: thy ᵖwitness is not true. Jesus answered and said unto them, Even if I bear witness concerning myself, yet my witness is true; for I know ᵠwhence I came and whither I go; but *ye* know not whence I came or whither I go. *Ye* judge according to the ʳflesh; I ˢjudge no one. Yea, and if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not ᵗalone, but I and the Father who sent me. And also in your law it is written that the witness of ᵘtwo men is true: I am one who bear witness concerning myself, and the Father who sent me ᵛbeareth witness concerning me. They said therefore unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye ʷneither know me nor my Father. If ye had ˣknown me, ye would have known my Father also.

o ch. 1.4,5,9. ch. 9. 5. ch. 12. 46.
p *cf.* ch.5.31. *cf.* ver. 17.
q ch. 13. 3. ch. 16. 28.
r ch. 7. 24. *cf.* Lk. 16. 15.
s ch. 3. 17. ch.12.47,48. *cf.* ch. 5.27.
t ver. 29. ch. 16. 32.
u Num. 35. 30. Deut. 17. 6.
v ch. 5. 37.
w ver. 55. ch. 16. 3. ch. 17. 25.
x *cf.*ch.1.18. *cf.* ch. 14.7.

those accepting condemnation was but a hiding-place. The sanctuary is opened then in sovereign grace, though the actual bringing to God, and the work that brings there, have not as yet found adequate expression. Holiness is found, however, in its true relation and due order: no condemnation leading on to no more sin. Grace and not law is the power for holiness.

2. The Lord returns to His speech with the multitude, interrupted by the appeal of the scribes and Pharisees, in words which have plain reference to what has just taken place. In that temple which, up to the moment of His final rejection, He was accustomed to speak of as His Father's house, where the Glory of old had tabernacled, and in the treasury in which the gifts of the worshipers were deposited, He openly claims that glory as His own. "I am the Light of the world," He says: "he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." The Sun is indeed rising above the hills of Judea; and the nations far and wide are to enjoy its light. Not only so, but Israel herself is beginning to be seen as part of that world which has been lying in the darkness. Sin and unbelief have shut out from her the glory which was or should have been her own, and now are shutting out the fuller splendor into which that earlier light has broadened. Israel has not vindicated any peculiar claim to that for which she has as a nation had no eyes, no heart. Light is for those that *have* eyes, and for practical use. So now it is "he that followeth Me": his alone is the blessing; *he* "shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Christ is the Life which objectively is the Light of men. In His words and acts the manifestation of God, the world in its contradiction of Him was necessarily manifested also. He was the test and touchstone of all, and in His presence every thing stood out in its true character. But thus also Christ received in the heart, the life received, becomes subjectively the light for it. In His light it finds light, and thus in following Him it has the "light of life."

A full, divine claim; and the Pharisees from their side naturally at once challenge it. "Thou bearest witness concerning Thyself," they say: "Thy witness is not true." But it is plain that that can rightly mean only "invalid." Obviously, a man may speak truly concerning himself; but his testimony, if unsupported, is insufficient. The Lord tells them that He speaks from knowledge; whereas they have only ignorance to oppose to it. They ought to have been able to recognize His divine mission at least, and owning this, they would have recognized His ability to testify also. But with all their ignorance they judged after a fleshly manner: putting themselves self-confidently into the

These things spake he in the treasury, as he taught in the temple; and no one took him; because his [y]hour was not yet come.

3 (21-29): From above, and returning thither: then to be manifested.

3. He said therefore again unto them, I [z]go my way; and ye shall seek me, and shall [a]die in your sin: whither I go ye [b]cannot come. They of Judea said therefore, Will he kill himself, that he saith, Whither I go ye cannot come? And he said unto them, Ye are from [c]beneath; I am from [d]above: ye are of this world; I am [e]not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for [f]except ye believe that I am [he], ye shall die in your sins. They said therefore unto him, [g]Who art thou? And Jesus said unto them, Absolutely* what I am even saying to you. I have many things to say and to judge concerning you; but he that sent me is true; and the things that I have [h]heard from him, these things I speak unto the world. They knew not that he spake unto them of the Father. Jesus therefore said, [i]When ye shall have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am [he], and that I do [j]nothing of myself; but as the Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he

*The rendering of the Authorized and Revised Versions, "from the beginning," is inadmissible. Both the tense and the verb itself forbid this.

[y] ch. 7. 8.

[z] *cf.* ch. 13. 33.

[a] ver. 24. *cf.* Ezek.3. 18.

[b] ch. 7. 34. *cf.* Hos.5.6. *ctr.* Jer.50. 4, 5.

[c] ver. 44.

[d] *cf.*ch.3.13. *cf.* ch. 17.8.

[e] ch. 17. 14, 16. *cf.*ch.18.36.

[f] *cf.* ch. 16.9 with Acts 4. 12.

[g] *cf.* ch.1.19. *cf.*Matt.26. 63.

[h] ch.3.11,32. *cf.*ch.15.15. ver. 40.

[i] ch. 3. 14. ch.12.32,33. *cf.* ch.16.8-11. *cf.* Acts 2. 36, 37.

[j] ch. 5.19,30.

judge's seat, for which they were incompetent; and ready to cut off, as in His case, those whom they ignorantly condemned. On His part, He was not taking the judge's seat, as the case of the woman illustrated. (Had He come to judge, they would all have been cut off.) And yet He truly was the One competent to do so, always in the mind of the Father, and one with it.

And if He bore witness concerning Himself, He did not stand alone in this. His witness was valid, for the Father who sent Him was bearing witness also concerning Him. He speaks evidently of those works of power, of which elsewhere He says, "The Father that abideth in Me, He doeth the works": a witness they could not deny, yet would not accept. And still they meet His claim with their mere ignorance: "Where is Thy Father?" The way to know His Father was to know Himself; and indeed they knew neither.

So He spoke in the treasury of the temple, and the hand of God was still upon them: they could do nothing. No one laid hand upon Him; for His hour to deliver Himself up, which waited His will, not theirs, was not yet come.

3. There is still no ear and no heart. He can only tell them, therefore, that He is going away—going to that place inaccessible to them, of which He had elsewhere spoken. They would seek Him, though not in true repentance, thus with no answer: they would die in their sin.

The men of Judea in sarcastic mockery say, He must mean to kill Himself: for the suicide's place of punishment is the only place they can think of where they cannot find Him. He tells them that they are from beneath, He from above: there is in them no work of God; the world in opposition to God has made them what they are: they are of it, as He is not. Thus they will die in their sins, because they will not by faith in Him lay hold of that mercy which God is holding out to them.

"Who then is He?" they ask. He can only answer that He is just what He is saying to them. Of what use to go on telling them things for which they have no ear? And concerning themselves also He has much to say and to judge;

who sent me is [k]with me: he hath not left me alone; for I do always the things that are [l]pleasing to him.

4 (30-47): Searched out.

4. As he spake these things, many [m]believed on him. Jesus therefore said to those of Judea that believed him, If ye [n]abide in my word, ye are my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They answered him, We are [o]Abraham's seed, and have [p]never been in servitude to any: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [q]Every one that practiseth sin is the bondman of sin. Now the bondman abideth not in the house for ever; the [r]son abideth for ever. If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free [s]indeed. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to [t]kill me, because my word hath no way with you. I speak that which I have [u]seen with my Father; and ye therefore do what ye have seen with [v]your father. They answered and said unto him, [w]Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the [x]works of Abraham. But now ye seek to [y]kill me, a man who hath told you the truth which I heard from God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the works of your father.

k ver. 16.
l *cf.* Matt.3. 17. *cf.* ch. 6.38. *cf.* ch. 17.4.
m *cf.*ch.2.23 -25. *cf.* ch. 7.31.
n *cf.*ch.15.7, 8. ver. 36. *cf.*Rom.8.2.
o vers.37,39. *cf.* Matt. 3. 9 with Lk. 16. 24, 25. *ctr.*Rom.4. 11, 12.
p *ctr.*Neh.9. 36, 37. *cf.*ch.19.15.
q *cf.* Tit.3.3. *cf.* Rom. 6. 16-21. *cf.*2 Pet. 2. 19.
r *cf.* Gen.21. 10. *cf.*Phile.15, 16.
s *cf.* Gal.5.1. *cf.* I Pet. 2. 16. *cf.* Rom. 8. 15.
t ch. 5. 18. ver. 59.
u ver. 26. *v* ver. 44; *cf.* 1 Jno. 3. 8. *w* ver. 33. *x* *cf.* Gal. 3. 7, 9. *y* ver. 37.

but of what use? Still the True One has sent Him, and He has truly declared His words to the world. But they do not know of whom He is speaking.

Then He goes on to speak of His lifting up which they in their unbelief are going to accomplish. Then will come His manifestation and His vindication. And even now He who has sent Him is with Him, He cannot leave to Himself One who constantly does the things that please Him.

4. A wave of conviction passes over the multitude, and on hearing these words many, we are told, believed on Him; but the expression is no stronger than with regard to those who "believed on His Name" when at the feast-day they saw the miracles that He did; and of whom it is said that "Jesus did not commit Himself to them" (chap. ii. 23–25). Of these also the Lord speaks doubtfully, and presently they resent His words and lapse into unbelief the fiercer for their disappointment in Him. Perhaps they had caught at the lifting up of which He had spoken, as exaltation by the people, followed as He had said it would be by the manifestation of Himself. The Lord's words to them are certainly words well suited to turn them from any thought of mere political liberty to be gained, and to test them as to their need of a real salvation. Abiding in His word, He tells them, would prove them to be really His disciples. They would know the truth, and the truth would make them free. But at once they resist and resent this. They, the seed of Abraham, in bondage, needing to be made free? they cry: how can He speak of that? they were never in bondage to any! Spite of its notorious contradiction to the truth, their protest shows of what bondage they were thinking. But the Lord will not raise a question here, but goes deeper. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Every one that practiseth sin is the bondman of sin;" and this, though men often count it freedom, is the bitterest bondage. Hence, as this is the condition of man in general, the first thing that he needs is to be set free. There is no such thing in the spiritual realm as self-attained freedom: salvation from sin must be of God.

But what then must be the relationship to God of those who are the slaves of sin? Freemen towards God they cannot be, and yet, though rebels in heart and

They said unto him, We were not born of fornication: we have [z]one Father,—God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would [a]love me: for I came forth from God, and am come [from him]: for neither am I [b]come of myself, but *he* [c]sent me. Why do ye not know my speech? Because ye [d]cannot hear my word. Ye are of the [e]devil [your] father, and the lusts of your father ye desire to do. *He* was a [f]murderer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth; because there is [g]no truth in him. When he speaketh falsehood, he speaketh of what is his own: for he is a [h]liar, and the father of it. And because I [i]speak the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you [j]convicteth me of sin? if I say truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God [k]heareth God's words: ye therefore hear not because ye are not of God.

5 (48-59): Immanuel.

5. They of Judea answered and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a [l]Samaritan, and hast a demon? Jesus answered, I have not a [m]demon; but I [n]honor

z *cf.* Deut. 32. 6. *cf.* Gal. 3. 26.
a *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 23. *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 1. *cf.* ch. 15. 23.
b ch. 5. 43. ch. 7. 28.
c *cf.* Heb. 5. 4, 5. ch. 3. 17.
d *cf.* 1 Cor. 2. 14. *cf.* Jer. 6. 10. *cf.* ch. 7. 17.
e *cf.* Matt. 13. 38. ver. 23. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.
f *cf.* Gen. 2. 17 with Heb. 2. 14.
g *cf.* Ezek. 28. 12-17.
h *cf.* Gen. 3. 4, 13. *cf.* 2 Cor. 11. 3. *cf.* Rev. 12. 9; *cf.* Rev. 20. 7-10.
i *cf.* 2 Thess. 2. 11, 12; *cf.* ch. 5. 43.
j *cf.* Lk. 23. 41, 47; *cf.* ch. 9. 31; *cf.* ch. 19. 4-7.
k *cf.* ch. 6. 37, 44; *cf.* ch. 10. 26; *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 6.
l *cf.* ch. 4. 9; *cf.* Lk. 10. 33; *cf.* Is. 53. 3.
m ver. 52; ch. 7. 20; ch. 10. 20, 21; *cf.* Matt. 12. 24.
n *cf.* ch. 5. 41; *cf.* ch. 12. 28.

will, cannot escape from service. But unwilling service is again but bondage: the slaves of sin are therefore the slaves of God.

Man being what he is, what then can the law, the boast of the Jew, in fact, do for him? To the "soul that sinneth" it denounces death, and the shadow of this hangs over all. The covenant of Sinai is that "which gendereth to bondage, which is (typically) Hagar" (Gal. iv. 24); and freedom is unknown to it.

We see, therefore, to what the Lord is going on in the next words, seemingly disconnected as they are from what precedes them. "Now the bondman," He says, "abideth not in the house for ever; but the son abideth ever." The apostle's illustration of Hagar and Ishmael cannot but come into remembrance; and the casting out of the bondwoman and her son was now soon to come to pass. Even this is but the dispensational shadow of the dread final rejection into outside darkness which the unsaved sinner, zealous law keeper as he may be, must surely experience.

"But the son abideth ever." He is in the freedom begotten of relationship, and not under the bondman's law which may cast him out. The principle is general, but there is no application of it with regard to Christians, as the Christian status of sonship was not yet known. In fact, only Christ Himself can make free, and this is the Lord's application of it here: "If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." For the Son is no mere servant in the Father's house, but one in word and purpose with the Father; and His work is that salvation-work which alone can make free. Thus again to abide in His word leads into that communion with the Father and the Son, in which alone is found the mastery of all restraints and difficulties whatever. Blessed then is freedom such as this! for ever blessed He who brings us into it.

The Lord goes on to speak of how little their Abrahamic lineage was manifested in their ways,—how little they could really claim him for their father. And when they dare to go further, and resting on their national privilege would assert God Himself to be their Father, He shows they have no spiritual character corresponding to this, and the devil was indeed their father: murderer as he was from the beginning, and not abiding in the truth, which just as such found no reception from them. Convict Him of sin they could not, and yet they would not hear what they could not confute.

5. They turn upon Him with a two-fold thrust in answer to His double

my Father, and ye dishonor me. But I [o]seek not mine own glory: there is [p]one that seeketh and judgeth. Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man [q]keep my word, he shall never behold death. They of Judea said unto him, Now we know that thou hast a demon. Abraham is [r]dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my word, he shall never taste of death. Art thou [s]greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? Jesus answered, If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing: it is my Father that [t]glorifieth me: of whom ye say that he is your God. And ye [u]know him not, but I know him; and if I said I know him not, I should be a liar like unto you; but I know him, and I [v]keep his word. Your father Abraham [w]rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad. They of Judea therefore said unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [x]Before Abraham came into being, I am. They took up [y]stones therefore to cast at him; but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple [passing through the midst of them, and so passed on].*

*Some omit.

o *cf.* ver. 54. *cf.* Phil. 2. 6-8.
p *cf.* ch. 5. 23. *cf.* Phil. 2. 9-11.
q *cf.* ch. 5. 24. *cf.* ch. 14. 23, 24.
r *cf.* Heb. 11. 13. *cf.* ch. 11. 25, 26 with 1 Thess. 4. 13, 14.
s *cf.* ch. 4. 12. *cf.* Heb. 3. 3.
t *cf.* ch. 5. 31, 41. ver. 50. *cf.* 2 Pet. 1. 17. *cf.* Heb. 1. 5, 6.
u ch. 7. 28. ver. 19.
v ver. 29. *cf.* ch. 15. 10.
w *cf.* Gen. 22. 1-18. *cf.* Gen. 15. 1-6.
x *cf.* Ps. 90. 1, 2 with Heb. 1. 10-12. *cf.* Heb. 13. 8.
y *cf.* vers. 5, 7, 11 with Is. 53. 5; ch. 10. 31.

charge. To the first, that they are no true children of Abraham, they retort that He is a Samaritan. To the second, that their father is the devil, that He is Himself possessed with a demon. The Lord quietly puts it away with the remark that they are dishonoring Him who seeks His Father's glory, not His own. But His Father seeks and judges. Then closing His assurance, still held out to whosoever will, of freedom by the truth, He takes up and removes the shadow which the law left hanging over its disciples, with His strongest form of affirmation: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep My word, he shall never behold death."

They meet it only with a shout of derision, for they know no removal of death save one, and without exercise of conscience know not even the sting of it—what makes death death. Abraham is dead and the prophets: is He greater, this man who will not permit, to His very disciples, even a taste of death?

But He answers: If He is but a man glorifying Himself, that glory is empty enough. Nay, but it is His Father glorifies Him,—He whom without true knowledge they call their God. On His part, if He denied the knowledge that He had of Him, He would be as false as they were now in professing that they knew Him. He did know Him, and kept His word. Then He looks back over the expectant ages awaiting Him whom now, being come, they refused, and affirms, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it and was glad." "Thou art not fifty years old," they reply; "and hast Thou seen Abraham?" His answer is the full disclosure of His glory, the claim of the incommunicable title of Deity for Himself: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham came into being, I AM."

It is Immanuel; but there is no knee bent to Him, no loving homage tendered. They take up stones to stone Him; and He, hiding Himself for the moment from their sacrilegious violence, passes out of the temple.

Sec. 2.

We have seen thus on God's part the sanctuary opened, God revealed in Christ in grace and truth,—the Life the Light of men. We have not yet seen the re-

SECTION 2. (Chaps. ix. x.)

The Going forth out of the Fold with Christ: Salvation, Freedom, Sustenance.

1 (ix.): The Light of Life.

1 (1-7): the Source of light.

1. [1] AND as he passed on, he saw a man [z]blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his [a]parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the [b]works of God should be manifested in him. I * must work the works of him that

* Some read, "We," but the context shows "I" should be read.

z *cf.* Acts 3. 2. *cf.* ch.11.10.

a *cf.* Lk.13.1 -5. *cf.* Ex.20.5. *cf.* Jer. 32. 18. *cf.* Ezek.18. 20.

b *cf.* ch.11.4. *cf.* 1 Tim.1. 16.

sponse to it on man's side. We have not seen the Light received, and Christ become as the result of this the Object for the heart. We find this in the present section; and the power of the revelation, by which henceforth the walk is with and in obedience to Him. But this involves in other respects also a complete change. For Judaism as a legal system implies throughout a shut up heaven, the veil which in it hung before the face of God. To Moses himself is said, "Thou canst not see My Face." Thus the soul brought to God is necessarily, by that fact, outside of Judaism. As the epistle to the Hebrews teaches us, to be "inside the veil" means therefore, of necessity, to be "outside the camp."

God also not being revealed, the light not having come, Judaism is but a fold in which the sheep meantime are shut up in the darkness. This is their safeguard indeed, until the expected Guide and Shepherd comes, though not giving the security of the Shepherd's presence. Thus also there is bondage yet, not liberty; and, though they may be fed in the fold, it is not the place of pasture. So, when the Shepherd comes, it is to lead out of the fold, and this section is a true Exodus. It is the going forth which we shall find actually accomplished in the history of the Acts, the Exodus of the New Testament. Here we have it in its principles; and the Gospel of John in this once more displays its character as anticipative of Christianity. It is, in fact, that "beginning" from which John dates in his first epistle; Christ Himself being the Root necessarily out of which all things spring; and here anticipatively with His work accomplished, the Prophet of the new era now at hand.

1. The historical basis here is given at length: an instructive example of one to whom light is communicated, not less spiritually than physically. His simplicity and firm adherence to the truth so far as he knows it are beautiful, spite of the opposition of the leaders of the people, over whom his straightforward honesty of heart gains a manifest victory. He is given the privilege of being cast out for Christ's name, even before he knows the glory of Him for whom he suffers. Cast out, he receives the revelation of the Son of God and worships; the first of the many to form the flock of the good Shepherd, outside the fold. As a follower of the Light, he walks no more in darkness, but has the light of life.

[1] Passing on out of the hands of His persecutors, the pitiable condition of a man blind from birth arrests the Lord's attention; and the disciples (of whom we now hear for the first time during His present visit to Jerusalem) inquire as to a matter full of perplexity to such as believed with the Rabbis in every physical evil as the result of some specific sin. Was this man so born for sin committed even before birth? or was it for the sin of his parents? Neither explanation of it seems to satisfy them; and indeed, looked at, as they contemplate it, as mere punishment, it must be ever hard to satisfy oneself as to the inequalities of it that seem upon the face of the things. The Lord lets in the light of a higher purpose, as applicable to any other as to the man then before Him,— "that the works of God should be made manifest in him." Of course, the sin which has come into the world has been the cause of all the evil in it; and, of course, there is very commonly specific punishment for specific sin. With this the heart can have no rest, however, until we realize that God is manifesting Himself in all human history; for this cannot be in mere righteousness only,

sent me, while it is [c]day. The night cometh, when no man can work. While I am in the world, I am the [d]light of the world. When he had said these things, he [e]spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and anointed his eyes with the clay, and said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is by interpretation, [f]Sent). He went away therefore, and washed, and came [g]seeing.

2 (8-34): the growth and conflicts of faith.

[2] The [h]neighbors therefore, and those who had before

[c] ch. 11.9,10.
[d] ch. 8. 12. *cf.* 1Pet.2.9.
[e] Mk. 7. 33. Mk. 8. 33. *cfr.* Num. 12. 14.
[f] *cf.* ch.4. 50. *cf.* Rom. 1. 5.
[g] ch. 11. 37. *cf.* Matt.11. 5.
[h] *cf.* Mk. 5. 19.

but in love as well. We have a whole book in the Old Testament devoted to the working out of this problem of the mission of evil, which in Job's case was mistaken by his friends in the same fashion as the disciples' question would indicate here. But if the manifestation of God in His works be the great overruling purpose everywhere, then not only must there be in general love as well as righteousness, but in every one of His works there must be love. Where love is not, there God is not: if "God is love." And here the miracle (or as Scripture would speak of it from its having this very character of manifesting God, the "*sign*") is only a *special* manifestation of Him who everywhere is the same God.

The Lord adds that the day for His activity as Man upon the earth is hastening to a close. For Him also, in that sense, the night is coming; and for the world also, from which He, the Light of it, is soon to be taken. This is not in contradiction to the truth that Christianity, with its wondrous blessings, was to follow His ascension to heaven: for Christianity is not the "light of the *world*," but the taking out of it a people, whose place is to be with Christ where He is, and whose blessings are "spiritual blessings in heavenly places." This is in perfect keeping with what is the doctrine now before us, the abandonment of the Jewish fold, and the gathering of Jews and Gentiles into one, outside it. For Christians it is the night that is passing, not the day; but a night in which we see far into heaven.

The Lord now spits upon the ground, and making clay with the spittle anoints the eyes of the blind man with the clay. That might seem as if it would rather confirm his blindness than remove it, and the typical significance speaks in the same way: for out of the ground man was made, and the spittle, connected so often with humiliation and reproach, adds such thoughts to the lowly condition which manhood in itself implied for Him. Thus with Christ the very grace which brought Him down so low was misunderstood and cavilled at by the pride and self-righteousness of scribes and Pharisees, and seemed, in fact, but to make the blind eyes blinder. The plain fact of His humanity became for them an unanswerable argument against His claim of divinity, as we find shortly here. But there is a remedy which will change all: "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam," says the Lord; and then that we may recognize the spiritual meaning of this, the interpretation of the name is added, "Sent." These interpretations (found in the Gospel of John alone) are in themselves significant, as we have seen already (chap. i. 41, 42), of the going over of spiritual blessing to the Gentiles, and the present one is again perfectly in keeping with the subject here. The water is the type of the Spirit, and the spring gushing from the temple-mount, where normally rested the cloud of the divine presence, the place of the "Father's house," was an apt figure of Him in His gracious working, who was to come after the Lord's ascension, "sent" to declare the Rejected One.

How differently does this poverty now appear when it is seen as the self-abasement of divine Love in quest of men, the poverty by which they are to be made rich! And how does the application of Him thus open the eyes indeed to all other things! "He went away therefore, and washed, and came seeing."

[2] Immediately the conflict begins; and first as to the man himself. So differ-

seen him that he was a [t]beggar, said, Is not this he who sat and begged? Some said, This is he; others said, Nay, but he is like him; *he* said, I am he. They said to him therefore, [j]How were thine eyes opened? He answered, The man called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said to me, Go to Siloam and wash. I went away therefore and washed, and recovered sight. They said to him, [k]Where is he? He said, I know not. They bring him to the Pharisees, the man once blind. Now it was the [l]sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. The Pharisees therefore also again asked him how he recovered sight. And he said to them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and see. Some of the Pharisees said therefore, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath. Others said, [m]How can a sinful man do such signs? and there was a division among them. They say again therefore to the blind man, What sayest thou of him, because he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a [n]prophet. The Jews therefore did not believe that he was blind and had recovered sight, until they called the parents of him who had recovered sight, and asked them, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? His parents answered and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now seeth we know not, or who opened his eyes *we* know not: ask him; he is of age; he will speak for himself. These things said his parents, because they [o]feared the Jews. For the Jews had already agreed that if any one confessed him to be the Christ, he should be [p]put out of the synagogue. On this account his parents said, He is of age: ask him. They called therefore the second time the man who had been blind, and said to him, Give glory to God; *we* know that this man is a [q]sinner. He answered therefore, If he is a sinner I know not; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see. They said to him therefore, What did he to thee? How opened he thine eyes? He answered them, I told you already, and ye did not hear: why would ye hear it again? would ye also become his disciples? They railed at him and said, Thou art *his* disciple; but we are [r]Moses' disciples. *We* know that God spake unto Moses, but this man, we know not [s]whence he is. The man answered and said unto them, Now in this is a wonderful thing, that *ye*

t *cf.* Lk. 18. 35-43.
j *cf.* ch. 3. 4.
k *cf.* ch. 10. 39-42. *cf.* ver. 35.
l *cf.* ch. 5. 9.
m *cf.* ch. 3. 2. *cf.* vers. 31-33. *cf.* ch. 10. 21.
n ch. 4. 19. ch. 6. 14.
o ch. 7. 13. ch. 12. 42, 43.
p ch. 16. 2. *cf.* Lk. 6. 22.
q ver. 16. *cf.* ch. 5. 23.
r *cf.* ch. 5. 45-47. *cf.* Acts 13. 27.
s *cf.* ch. 7. 27, 28. *cf.* ch. 8. 14.

ent is he with the light in those blank and sightless eyes, that they cannot at first believe it is the same. Then comes the question, what has made this change; and he refers it to the "man called Jesus." There is as yet little knowledge indeed of the One who has had compassion upon Him. Still it has taken hold, and a little germ of faith, scarcely to be distinguished as that at first, increases amid opposition, even by means of it, until, having learned to own Him as a prophet, the glory of the Son of God is finally revealed.

know not whence he is, and he hath opened mine eyes. We know that God [t]heareth not sinners; but if any one be a worshiper of God and doeth his will, him he heareth. Never* was it heard that any one opened the eyes of one that was born blind. Except this man were of God, he could do [u]nothing. They answered and said unto him, Thou wast wholly [v]born in sins, and dost *thou* teach us? And they [w]cast him out.

3 (35–41): the revelation.

3 Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having [x]found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the [y]Son of God? He answered and said, And who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him? Jesus said to him, Thou hast even seen him, and he who speaketh with thee is he. And he said, I believe, Lord; and he [z]worshiped him. And Jesus said, For judgment am I come into this world; that they that see not might see, and that they that see might become [a]blind. Some of the Pharisees that were with him heard these things, and

* or, "Since the world was."

t *cf.* Ps. 66. 18. *cf.* Acts 19. 13–16.
u *cf.* ch. 5. 19. *cf.* ch. 14. 10, 11.
v ver. 2. *cf.* Ps. 51. 5. *cf* Lk. 18. 11, 12.
w ver. 22.
x *cf.* Heb. 13 10–13. *cf.* Heb. 10. 19–21. *cf.* ch. 8. 9.
y *cf.* vers. 11, 17, 25, 31, 33. *cf.* ch. 1. 49.
z *cf.* ch. 14. 9. *cf.* ch. 20. 16, 17, 28. *cf.* Phil. 2. 10. *cf.* Rev. 5. 12.
a *cf.* Matt. 13. 12–15. *cf.* Acts 6. 51–53.

The picture of hierarchic pretension with its blindness and hostility to the truth is complete. The Pharisees question the man, the parents, the man again. That the unbribed power of God has acted they have no wish to take into their argument. If He has, let Him have the praise of it: that hinders nothing the condemnation of Him with whom God has chosen to ally Himself, for His share in the matter. Did He not make the clay upon the Sabbath-day? The man with clearer insight affirms that God does not hear sinners: if He were not of God He would not be owned of God after this manner.

They have no argument to meet this; all the more earnestly do they denounce it. A man wholly born in sins,—for was not his blindness proof enough of that?—to be teaching *them!* So they cast him out of the synagogue: they have before decided that if any should confess that the Worker of these mighty deeds was Christ, he should be cast out. Thus the open rupture with the disciples of Christ has begun on the part of the synagogue.

3 He is cast out; but cast only in this way into the company of Christ at whom all this is aimed. Nor will he be long left without the blessedness of such companionship. Again Jesus finds him, as before He found him, now to complete the work which He had then begun. "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" He asks; and he, though not knowing Him in that glory which is His, yet with full confidence in his Guide, inquires, "And who is He, Lord, that I may believe on Him?" He is following on in the track of the light that is come to him, and now has reached the Source of it. "Jesus said to him, Thou hast even seen Him, and He that speaketh to thee is He." At which, with the straightforward simplicity that had baffled the Pharisees, and now yields itself with complete conviction to the completing truth, he answers, "I believe, Lord;" and worships. He has not found merely a creed: he is brought to God. That which we did not apprehend in the woman is now unmistakably seen in the once blind man: he is morally and spiritually, as well as physically enlightened; he is in the light, and the light also is in him.

And the Lord, who came not into the world for the purpose of judging it, but for its salvation, nevertheless by the fact of His presence in it, has brought judgment into it. The necessary effect is found that the (consciously) blind—the seekers therefore of light—are brought to see; while the pretentious seers—the men of this world's wisdom—are made blind. The Pharisees ask where they are to be classed—with the blind or with the seeing. The Lord answers them

they said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye would have [b]no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin [c]remaineth.

2 (10): The flock outside the fold.
1 (1-5): the call of the true Shepherd.

2. [1] Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not through the [d]door into the sheepfold, but mounteth up elsewhere, *he* is a [e]thief and a robber. But he that entereth through the door is the [f]shepherd of the sheep. To him the [g]porter openeth; and the sheep [h]hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by [i]name, and [j]leadeth them out. And when he hath put forth all his own, he goeth [k]before them, and the sheep [l]follow

b *cf.* ch.15.22-24. *cf.* Jas.4.17. *cf.* Acts 3. 17. *cf.* Rom. 5. 13.
c *cf.* Rom.2. 17-29. *cf.* ch.20.23.
d *cf.* ch. 1.45 with Heb. 5. 4-6.
e ver. 8. *cf.* ch. 5. 43.
f Ps. 23. 1. *cf.* Gen. 49. 24.

ver. 14. *g cf.* Matt.3. 13-17; *cf.* Is. 42. 1-4. *h* ver. 27; *cf.* ch. 6. 44. *i cf.* Ex. 28. 9, 10, 21; *cf.* ch. 20. 16; *cf.* Is. 43. 1. *j cf.* ch. 9. 34-38, *cf.* Heb. 13. 13; *cf.* Gal. 5. 2. *k cf.* Col. 2. 11-15; *cf.* ch.17. 19. *l cf.* Num. 10. 33; *cf.* Col. 3. 1.

that they have classed themselves: they say, "we see." Had they been blind, the sin that now was theirs would not have remained to them.

2. By the will of the Jews themselves therefore, the flock of Christ are now outside the fold. From His own side the Lord now confirms this: for He had come as the Shepherd into it, to lead out His sheep into a larger place. The principle of the fold is now to be given up: restraint is now to be exchanged for freedom,—a freedom made safe by an Object for the heart, controlling it by its affections, and by a living guidance which is realized as that of perfect wisdom, indissolubly united to as perfect love.

[1] That Israel were the sheep of Jehovah had been the theme of the prophets of old. He who came into this fold to exercise authority must do so under the plain warrant of Jehovah Himself. And Ezekiel had prophesied in His Name that He would raise up for them "one Shepherd" who should feed them, even His "servant David" (xxxiv. 23): that Greater one of David's line, of whom that king had only been the fore-runner and type. This was, of course, Messiah, the Lord's Anointed; and every mark that pointed out the Anointed pointed out the Shepherd of Israel also. These marks combined constituted the "door," or way of entrance by which the true claimant of such prerogative would come. All else were but thieves and robbers: men seeking their own gain in ways of treachery and violence. The entrance by the door was possible but to One,—the true Shepherd,—to whom the porter would open. He, so coming, would call His own sheep by name and lead them out.

The interpretation that would apply all this to the New Testament ministry in general, is so forced and really arrogant in its assumption, as scarcely to need notice. The one expression, "*His own* sheep" can apply to no under-shepherd; and who but He could call them by name, and lead them out? To Him alone every thing applies in the simplest and fullest way. Coming at the time definitely predicted by Daniel, confessedly of David's line, born at Bethlehem, displaying the signs that none other ever did, and that unique character which could not permit confounding Him with any other,—He came through the door manifestly. And the Spirit of God in the prophesyings at His birth, at His presentation in the temple, in the testimony of the Baptist, and the visible anointing which preceded this, opened the door of the fold. Now the sheep were beginning to hearken to His voice, calling them each by his name with a knowledge which individualized them all, with perfect and tender knowledge. These were His own sheep, but not all the sheep in the Jewish fold; and this is the strange thing that now becomes manifest, that though He who has come is the Shepherd of Israel, it is not Israel as a whole that knows His voice. Like many of the eastern folds, this one is found to have other sheep than His sheep. The call is an appeal to faith which not all have; and by it is wrought a separation, which sets them outside of the fold of Judaism altogether.

He "leadeth them out:"—stronger still in the next sentence: "when He has

2 (6-21): salvation, liberty, sustenance, in company with the Good Shepherd: the contrast with wolf and hireling.

him; for they know his voice. But a [m]stranger they will in no wise follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers.

[2] This allegory spake Jesus unto them; but *they* [n]knew not what things he was saying unto them. Jesus said therefore again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the [o]door of the sheep. All those that came [p]before me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any one enter in, he shall be [q]saved, and shall [r]go in and out, and find [s]pasture. The [t]thief cometh not save to steal and

m cf. vers. 12, 13. *cf.* Gal. 1.8. *cf.* 2 Cor. 11. 13-15.
n cf. ch. 8.43.
o cf. ch. 14.6. *cf.* Acts 4. 12.
p cf. Jer. 23. 1-6. *cf.* Ezek. 34. 1-6. *cf.* Zech. 11. 16, 17.
q cf. Acts 16. 30, 31.
r cf. Rom. 8. 2.
s cf. Ezek. 34. 14; *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 2.
t ver. 8; *cf.* 2 Pet. 2. 1-3.

put forth all His own." For the principle of the fold is now to be abandoned. "The law is not of faith;" and faith is the sole productive energy in man for God: "faith, if it have not works, is dead," so necessarily productive is it, as surely as it is living: and "faith worketh by love." But law is a system of prohibition, whose inspiring principles are self-interest and fear; while "there is no fear in love." "Love seeketh *not* her own."

The law was a prohibitory fence thrown around men, the curb upon a will which was naturally lawless, which it could not change, and which fretted against it. Hence it was bondage and not liberty: under which the very children of God were as servants, and not sons (Gal. iv. 1, 3, 7); and which therefore did not yield for the Father's heart that which would satisfy Him. Every way the fold must go: Christ must put forth *all* His sheep; the putting forth implying however the strange power that a legal system yet may have even over true believers. How needful indeed this putting forth, and the history of the resistance to it, the Acts with the book of Revelation will by and by declare to us.

As we know, they were not all His sheep that lay in that Jewish fold; and His presence in it was that which tested this, and drew the line of separation. His sheep were they who recognized the Shepherd's voice; not merely knew Him by external testimony, but in the response of their hearts to what appealed to them as no other. Hence they were drawn, and followed Him in that wondrous path in which they found Him ever before them, in the track of light His footsteps left. And the Shepherd adds with regard to them, in the deep satisfaction of His own heart, "A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." They are not obliged to know whose voice it is, nor to be learned in theological disquisitions. There is but one Voice for which they have ear or heart; and from another voice they flee; for from any who would simulate that Voice, or claim authority over them beside, they do right in suspecting evil. For the sheep ordinarily, apart from what may appeal to them in the need of others, their best safety is in flight.

[2] But those to whom He is speaking understand nothing of what He is saying; the Lord therefore repeats and emphasizes His claim as the Shepherd of the sheep; dwelling upon their happiness with Him, in contrast with those who would make them a prey, or at least follow their own interests and leave them as a prey to others. He as the *Good* Shepherd would lay down His life for them; and that as the expression of the Father's love.

He begins with the assertion of His being the door of the *sheep*. It is not a question of the *fold* any more: there is no longer a fold; His sheep were in it, but are now ideally outside it altogether. The flock is His, and in His hand; and He is the only way of entrance into it. *He* receives into the fellowship of His people. Others that had come before Him were only thieves and robbers, with no title, and seeking no interests but their own; but His true sheep had never been deceived; and amid the multitudinous voices now, His voice, so unlike all others, rings out still, clear and distinct in its appeal to those in con-

to kill and to destroy; I came that they might have [u]life, and have it [v]abundantly. I am the [w]good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep. But he who is a hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, beholdeth the [z]wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf seizeth them and [y]scattereth the sheep. [The hireling fleeth,] * because he is a [z]hireling, and is not concerned about the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and [a]know those that are mine, and those that are mine [b]know me; even as the [c]Father knoweth me, and I know the Father; and I [d]lay down my life for the sheep. And [e]other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring; and they shall hear my voice, and shall become one [f]flock, one shepherd. Therefore doth the Father [g]love me, because I lay down my life, that I

u *cf.* ch.6.33.
v *cf.*ch.7.37-39.
w *cf.* Is. 40. 11. *cf.*Ezek.34. 11-13,22-25. *cf.* Heb. 13. 20. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 25. *cf.*Matt.20. 28.
x *cf.* 1 Sam. 17. 34-36. *cf.* Acts 20. 29.
y *cf.* Zech. 13. 7.
z *cf.* 1 Pet.5. 2.
a ver. 27. *cf.*Nah.1.7. *cf.* ch. 6. 64. *cf.* 2 Tim.2. 19.
b ver. 4. *cf.* 2 Tim.1.

* Many omit.

12. *c cf.* Matt. 11. 27. *d cf.* ch. 15. 13; *cf.* 1 Jno. 3. 16. *e cf.* ch. 17. 20; *cf.* Acts 15. 7-9; *cf.* Is. 56. 8. *f cf.* ch. 11. 52; *cf.* Eph. 2. 13-16; *cf.* Col. 3. 10, 11; *cf.* Eph. 3. 1-6. *g cf.* ch. 5. 20; *cf.* Phil. 2. 9; *cf.* Eph. 5. 2.

sciousness of their need and guilt. Where is there another who could propose to meet all the unrest in human hearts for every one who should come to Him? and who but He has done it?

Again He declares: "I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." Salvation—a strange thing in this sense to the Jew—here lies at the very beginning of the blessings belonging to the flock of Christ; not as a possible attainment, but as a gift of unconditional grace, never therefore to be revoked. This positive assured security of His people tells at once that He and they are outside the legal fold. So the liberty that is associated with this speaks also: "He shall go in and out;" that is, the fold is no longer a place of confinement for him. He may in New Testament liberty go back to find in the Old Testament what God has given of Christ in it; but he belongs to it no more. Then also "he shall find pasture": the true place of it is certainly outside the fold. All here combines to tell his blessing, and where he now belongs.

The assurance of all blessing lies in this that he is in the care of the Good Shepherd. Wisdom and love are His; with power also that can lack no resources. The thief comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy. He on the contrary comes to give life, and that abundantly. Here a power beyond all creature power is seen; a need which is beyond all that the figure would imply. The theme of John's Gospel discloses itself once more: life, which is eternal and His gift, without whose work none could have it. This, of course, looks backward as well as forward: life for any, at any time, could be but the result of His coming; which waited not for its effectuation to bring forth its fruit; or else, of necessity, every mercy shown to man must have waited likewise. But we know without any peradventure it was not so.

Manifested, however, the life was not, until the personal Life had come. It was possessed, as we have seen, new birth—without which none could see the Kingdom of God—involving its possession; but it was possessed in the midst of hindrances of the most effectual kind to manifestation. This is a question of the condition of the life, and not of the life itself. The babe does not yet manifest what the man is; and yet it has the life and nature of the man.

In the Son come into the world, the eternal life was first and fully manifested. It was seen in Him in that knowledge of and communion with the Father, which was in Him perfect, and never clouded for a moment. And by Him it

may take it again. No one taketh it from me, but I lay it down of [h]myself. I have [i]authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it again: this [j]commandment have I received of my Father.

There was a [k]division among the Jews on account of these words. And many of them said, He hath a [l]demon, and raves; why hear ye him? Others said, These are not the sayings of one who hath a demon. Can a demon [m]open the eyes of the blind?

h *cf.* ch. 18. 6. *cf.* Matt. 26. 53.
i *cf.* Heb. 10. 5–9. *cf.* ch. 2. 19. *cf.* Acts 4. 28. *cf.* Heb. 2. 14.
j ch. 14. 31. *cf.* ch. 17. 4.
k ch. 9. 16.
l ch. 8. 48.
m *cf.* ch. 9. 31, 32.

was revealed as the portion of those who in faith received Him; for, now that He had come, there was no faith that did not receive Him. He that believed on the Son had eternal life; and he that was not subject to the Son did not see life, but the wrath of God abode upon him.

Nor did this wait for redemption to be accomplished. "The hour is coming, *and now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." Thus already was He quickening dead souls with the life that was in Him; and in His prayer to the Father in which He declares that "this is life eternal, that they should know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent," He declares also that this knowledge they already had: "they have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me."

Thus the eternal life communicated to men was already exhibiting itself in its true character; already men knew the Father and the Son. But this was not yet the life in its full abundance; of which the Lord here speaks. Its character was manifested as a life of divine acquaintance and communion; but for this communion to be enjoyed aright, it needed to be freed from many great and terrible hindrances: the Cross had to be accomplished; the resurrection of Christ from the dead must give the answer on God's part to the claim of righteousness there made good, that now as risen with Christ we might be possessors of a life triumphant over death, and justified from all that had brought in death, in a recognized place of nearness to God unknown before. There in the place of sons with God, and with the Spirit of sonship to give the enjoyment of the place, the life eternal would at last have its true abundance. This is what the Lord here looks forward to: the development of it awaits us in the portion of the Gospel soon to come before us, with the Epistle to the Romans for the results in known justification, and the believer's place in Christ, and the Epistle of John for the practical results in the life down here.

He is come then to give life: as the Good Shepherd, by laying down His own: yet it is not so much doctrine that is here, as the insistence upon a love proved at whatever cost. The hireling cares but for his wages: the sheep are not his own, and he is not personally concerned about them: when the wolf appears, he leaves the sheep and flees; alas, no supposititious case, but what has been abundantly seen in history. The wolf in consequence, the open adversary, catches them and scatters them. The hireling acts in character: nothing better could be expected of him. On the contrary, between the Good Shepherd and His own exists a bond of the most tender intimacy. "I know My own, and they know Me; even as My Father knoweth Me, and I know My Father: and I lay down My life for the sheep." "The world knew Him not:" there was the strangeness resulting from contrasted natures. His sheep know Him: for they have received His life and nature, and have thus been brought into communion; and this is the same kind of knowledge as exists (however much more perfectly) between the Father and the Son. The love implied in it is manifested in this, that He lays down His life for the sheep.

But His sheep as thus defined have no longer any relationship with the Jewish fold, still less can be limited to those who have such. Law could not give this

3 (22-30): the Glory manifested in the re-dedicated temple, and His own in His hand.

3 Now the feast of the [n]dedication was taking place at Jerusalem [and]* it was winter. And Jesus was walking in the temple in Solomon's porch. The Jews therefore came round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou hold our soul in suspense? If thou art the Christ, tell us [o]plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believe not: the [p]works that I do in

* Some omit.

n *cf.* ch. 2. 19, 20. *cf.* Matt. 24. 1, 2.

o *cf.* Matt. 21. 23-27.

p ver. 38. ch. 5. 36. *cf.* Acts 2. 22.

gift of eternal life, nor have, therefore, any control over it. In the fold itself there had been those that were not His own; and there are sheep of His not of that fold at all, but Gentiles, far enough off, to be brought nigh and made to hear His voice. Then there shall be one *flock*, one Shepherd. There is no *fold* any more: the fold was Jewish and legal, and is gone. In Christ is neither Jew nor Gentile.

That wondrous act of self-devotion by which all blessing is effected and justified for men gives to the Father's heart a new reason for the love wherewith He loves even His well-beloved Son. "Therefore doth the Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I may take it again." He does not lay it down, as giving up that humanity which He has taken to accomplish the work,—the earthen vessel in which alone the bird of heaven could die. Nay, He takes up again, though in changed condition, the life He has laid down,—takes it to lay it down no more. His death is neither the exhaustion of His love, nor the limit of His work for man. He has served in the lowest deep of suffering on earth; He serves on the Throne of glory still. And the Father's love, which thus rests upon Him as Man continually, embraces as well the fruits of His work, —the men for whom He has toiled, and suffered, and won. This is all fully told out in the epistles of Paul specially; but John, though in some respects the very opposite of Paul, has many connecting links of doctrine with him; beyond the rest of the inspired writers; and this is true even as compared with Luke, whose Gospel has been even styled Paul's Gospel. We shall soon be called to realize this, which here begins to dawn on us. Our acceptance in the Beloved, of which Paul speaks (Eph. i. 6), roots itself in this peculiar love of the Father to the Son.

But the Lord goes further than this, and shows us the Father's purpose in that which He is executing, the Father's commandment entrusted to Him to execute. Not by constraint but freely He lays down His life: "No one taketh My life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself: I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it again." For as Man, He will not dispose of His own life without the Father's sanction; but that is not all: "this *commandment* have I received of My Father." Thus throughout He is the obedient servant of the divine counsels: one with the Father in what He has in hand to do; the Word, in all things the expression of the Divine Mind; and still "we behold His glory,—glory as of an Only-begotten with the Father, full of grace and truth."

So "there was a division again among the Jews on account of these words." On the one hand they repeat the old blasphemy, that He had a demon, and was raving. Others object to such a sentence, and yet seem to go no further than perplexity. In sorrowful indecision only, the matter for the present ends.

3 The feast of the dedication of the temple occurred two months later than the previous narrative; the connection of it with it is, however, manifest. The dedication commemorated was not that of Solomon's, but the re-dedication by Judas Maccabæus, after its profanation by Antiochus. Yet the Lord walking in Solomon's porch (or colonnade) is surely significant in this way, as carrying us back to that first dedication, if only by way of contrast. The massive foundations of Solomon's structure remained, but only in ruin, which, however sought to be repaired, witnessed to what had come in the way of failure and ruin. How

my Father's name these bear witness of me. But ye believe not [q]because ye are not of my sheep, [as I told you].* My sheep [r]hear my voice, and I [s]know them, and they [t]follow me. And I give unto them [u]eternal life; and they shall in no wise ever perish; and no one shall [v]seize them out of my hand. My Father who gave them to me is greater than all; and no one is able to seize them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are [w]one.

q ch. 8. 47. *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 6. *cf.* ch. 6. 44.
r ver. 3. *cf.* Rom. 10. 17. *cf.* Acts 16. 4.
s vers. 14, 15.
t *cf.* ch. 8. 12. vers. 3, 4. *cf.* ch. 6. 66-69.
u ch. 3. 16. *cf.* ch. 17. 3.
v *cf.* ch. 6. 39.

*Many omit.

cf. Rom. 8. 35-39; *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 5. w *cf.* ch. 5. 19; *cf.* ch. 14. 9-11; *cf.* ch. 17. 21-24.

much this second temple, again renewed with great magnificence by the bloody hands of the Edomite Herod, lacked of what the old possessed! As it stood, it was the very witness of their pretentious legalism, covering up the decay and desolation underneath. The Glory was departed, the Living Voice that had once spoken to them was silent now. The Ark and Mercy-seat, where the covering blood should have been sprinkled, the Throne of the divine Inhabitant, was gone. All went on now, not upon the old basis, but only as permitted by long-suffering patience, still pleading, still abused.

Yet the Maccabæan outburst of loyalty to God had for awhile seemed to argue better things in the near future for the returned remnant of a people already scattered. Alas, it was but the convulsive leap of a flame that for a moment sought the heavens, and then died down to its now cold ashes. On man's part, what hope more? In a few souls God's mercy kept hope still; but the fulfilment of it lingered long.

And now there was a new Voice in Solomon's porch: a Voice that did not ignore the ruin, did not accord with the Pharisaism which the people followed, did not ring with the trumpet-tones of the warlike zealotry which would seize its triumph out of the reluctant hand of time; and yet thrilled heart and conscience, as if all the being of man were in His hand and answered to His summons. The Light shone; and the depths within were penetrated by it.

For in fact the Glory had returned, and the Voice long silent had again awakened. It had proclaimed itself in the temple and synagogue, as well as in the places of daily concourse, and in the quiet homes of men. Here was He for whom they had dedicated and re-dedicated the temple, the fitting completion to their celebration of it now. But the fervor of enthusiasm around Him was not for Him: already He had been rejected, vilified and blasphemed; and the few who really listened had to take as outcasts their place with Him. But He was leading them out; and the hand that led them sheltered them; the glory of His presence shone around them: they are hidden in the Sanctuary of it from all that would injure them; for none shall pluck them out of His hand.

The Jews come round about Him in Solomon's porch, and urge Him not to leave them longer in suspense, but tell them plainly if He is the Christ. He answers that He has already told them without effect; and that the works He was doing in His Father's Name bore witness of Him. They believed not because they were not of His sheep, who heard His voice. These sheep of His He knew, and they followed Him. He had said this before; but He now adds: "And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall in no wise ever perish," (it is the strongest possible affirmation,) "nor shall any one pluck them out of My hand."

The absolute security of the sheep of Christ could hardly be more fully affirmed. For, first of all, they have a nature which, as divine, is truly everlasting; it has become truly their own nature, although it is true that they have yet also in them a fleshly nature which is not in conformity, but in contradiction to it. This, which seems to many a strange doctrine, is nevertheless the true experience of every child of God. Yet in face of it the apostle can say, "Who-

The Jews therefore again took up [x]stones that they might stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shown you from the Father: for which of these good works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, For a good work we stone thee not, but for [y]blasphemy, and because thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not [z]written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods to whom the word of God came, (and Scripture [a]cannot be broken) say ye of him whom the Father hath [b]sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do

x ch. 8. 59.
y *cf.* Matt. 9. 3. *cf.* ch. 19. 7. *cf.* Lev. 24. 16.
z Ps. 82. 6. *cf.* Ex. 22. 9, 28.
a *cf.* Matt. 5. 17-19. *cf.* 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. *cf.* Acts 13. 29.
b *cf.* ch. 8. 42. *cf.* ch. 1. 32-34.

soever is born of God doth not commit," or "practise," "sin: for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." The character of the divine life in him is such that it masters the evil; not, in final result, is mastered by it. It abides; it is eternal life.

But the Lord does not leave us to any inference, even the surest: He goes on to say: "And they shall in no wise ever perish." The consequence is developed, and the negation faces every way: think of what danger you may, that "in no wise ever perish" meets it all. The weakness of the creature, its mutability, with the sad history of change that lies against it, all is met by such an assurance. But the Lord goes even further: He looks at the question of the world against these poor sheep of His,—the world, and Satan the prince of it,—and He seals His assurance with a double seal: They are Mine, He says: "No one shall seize them out of My hand. My Father who gave them to Me is greater than all; and no one is able to seize them out of the Father's hand." The Cloud is opening now to let out the enfolded Glory; now it shines fully out: "I and the Father are one."

The meaning of this last assertion has nevertheless been disputed. It is plain how those who heard Him took it, and how, instead of expressing alarm and grief at so great a mistake, He confirms finally their interpretation. Schaff well shows the argument, which I can do no better than insert in this place. He says (Lange's Commentary on John):—

"The neuter ἓν (one) denotes, according to the connection and for the purpose of the argument, unity of *will* and *power;* which rests on the unity of *essence* or *nature:* for power is one of the divine attributes, which are not outside of the divine essence, but constitute it. Even if we confine ἓν to dynamic unity, we have here one of the strongest arguments for the strict divinity of Christ. It is implied even more in ἐσμεν (we are) than in ἓν. No creature could possibly thus associate himself in one common plural with God Almighty without shocking blasphemy or downright madness. In this brief sentence we have, as Augustine and Bengel observe, a refutation both of Arianism and Sabellianism: ἓν refutes the former by asserting the dynamic (and, by implication, the essential) unity of the Father and the Son. 'I and the Father' and 'we are' refute the latter by asserting the personal distinction. Sabellianism would require the masculine εἷς, instead of the neuter; and this would be inconsistent with 'We are,' and the self-conscious 'I.'"

The Jews understand well enough, and take up stones to stone Him: but the might of His presence stills them. He calmly appeals to them: "Many good works have I shown you from the Father: for which of these good works do ye stone Me?" They could not deny the power or the goodness, but the grace which had brought the Son of God among them in such lowly guise, they could not believe: "For a good work we stone Thee not, but for blasphemy; and because Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God." Thus His words seemed against His works, and for His words they condemned Him; in His reply, there-

not the [c]works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and [believe] * that the Father is [d]in me, and I in the Father.

They sought therefore again to take him, and he [e]went forth out of their hand; and went away again [f]beyond Jordan unto the place where John was baptizing at the first; and he abode there. And many came unto him; and they said, John indeed did no sign, but [g]all things that John spake concerning this man were true. And [h]many believed on him there.

* Many read, "understand."

[c] ch. 14. 10, 11. ch. 15. 24.
[d] ch. 14. 10. cf. ch. 17. 22, 23.
[e] ch. 8. 59. cf. Lk. 4. 30.
[f] ch. 1. 28. cf. ch. 7. 1.
[g] ch. 1. 7, 29-34. ch. 3. 27-36. ch. 5. 33.
[h] cf. ch. 7. 31. cf. ch. 8. 30.

fore, He appeals to their own Scriptures, their "Law," as they themselves called the whole of them, but the spirit of which their unsubject hearts had so little entered into. Was it not written in their law, "I said, Ye are gods"? Thus the title of "gods" had been given to mere men; but who by the word of God that came to them, the commission by which they, the judges in Israel, acted, became His representatives. "If those who in so acting had received an indirect commission, were gods, the very representatives of God, could it be blasphemy when He claimed to be the Son of God, who had received, not authority through a word transmitted through long centuries, but direct personal command to do the Father's work; had been directly and personally consecrated to it by the Father, and directly and personally sent by Him, not to say, but to do the work of the Father? Was it not rather the true and necessary inference from these premises?" (*Edersheim.*)

The Lord here doubtless refers, not to that of which He Himself alone could have the consciousness, but to His open anointing by the Spirit in bodily form, and the Father's attesting words, when after His baptism by John He went forth to His ministry. John had borne witness to Him in connection with this, as the "Son of God." Was it not suitable that, if men by God's commission could represent Him so, He, sent openly among men in such a manner, should be in fact such a Representative as only the true Son could ever be?

The works of His Father done by Him confirmed all this in the fullest way. They implied this abiding of the Father in Him, in the power displayed, His abiding in the Father in intimacy of communion. Thus there was sufficient witness to the truth of His claims; and if they believed not His words, they might at least believe His works.

The seal which the Lord puts upon the perfection of Scripture is as plain as possible. "Scripture cannot be broken." The fact of its being Scripture guarantees the absolute inspiration of the very words used. The term He builds upon might seem to be at least somewhat extreme as applied to men; yet He takes it as an example of a rule of the most universal character, to which no exception at all can be made. Not only this or that statement which it makes can be demonstrated as true, but the mere fact of its being in Scripture sufficiently vouches for it. The highest Critic that can be never criticizes Scripture, but affirms the truth of all of it; and the futility of all men's efforts to break it in pieces. They are doomed of necessity to defeat and dishonor, as is all the rebellion of the creature against God.

But Israel rejected the testimony of His words and works together. Again they sought to take Him,—a thing impossible until His own time came. He went forth out of their midst unharmed, and went to where formerly John had baptized, where, the soil having been broken up, the seed of His word took root. "John," they said, "did himself no miracle; but all that John spake of this Man was true. And many believed on Him there."

SECTION 3. (Chaps. xi., xii.)

Resurrection-Life; in which the Son of God is glorified.

1 (xi. 1-46): The presence of the Life.

1 1-4: the call and the purpose.

1. [1] Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus from [i]Bethany, of the village of Mary and her sister Martha. It was Mary who [j]anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. Therefore his sisters [k]sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest* is sick. But when Jesus heard it, he said, This sickness is [l]not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby.

[i] *cf.* Lk. 10. 38, 39. *cf.* Lk. 24. 50.

[j] ch. 12. 3.

[k] *cf.* Lk. 7. 3. *cf.* ch. 4. 46, 47.

[l] *cf.* ver. 11. *cf.* Matt. 9. 24. *cf.* ch. 9. 3.

* φιλεις, the love of a friend.

Sec. 3.

We have now the character of the life received as resurrection-life. For us it has necessarily sprung out of death, the death of Another: according to the Lord's words that we find here, that, "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but, if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

For us also quickening is out of death. Dead naturally in trespasses and sins, we are quickened together with Christ, and raised up together. The first is a change of condition, an immense one, from death unto life, from a naturally hopeless state of alienation from God ("alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their hearts,") to a state of knowledge of God which implies communion with Him, even though it be at first about our sins. "*Risen* with Christ" is a change of position; the *place* of the dead is changed for the place of the living: it is the opposite of burial, as life is the opposite of death.

Thus resurrection-life is life with the fruits of Christ's death attaching to it; fruits into the enjoyment of which we come more or less gradually, but which belong to us from the beginning of the life itself. Here we find the removal of the hindrances which have existed to our drawing near to God, and the opening of the sanctuary: the realization upon our side of that which upon God's side we have seen already. This shows us the unity of this third subdivision, as also we have seen.

It is Christ's death that has delivered us from the bondage of the law, and brought us out of the fold into the green pastures into which the Shepherd leads His sheep. The sections here unite together into a perfect whole, as needs must be the case where they are realities of the Spirit's work, and in Scripture which is everywhere a living organism.

The section divides naturally into two parts: the first, dwelling upon the presence among men of the Personal Life Himself; the second showing the death, out of which for us the life must come.

1. The presence of the Life is for those who receive Him the annulling of death, as is shown for us illustratively in the resurrection of Lazarus. Here text and sermon are interwoven throughout; the Lord's words interpreting His works, while yet the faith of His disciples was unable to apprehend in any proper way what for full development waited the coming of the Spirit to disclose. Here again we find the anticipative character of the Gospel, and the link between John and Paul, of which I have before spoken. We must go on to Ephesians and Colossians to learn fully what it is to be quickened and raised up with Christ, though here we have the basis of the doctrine.

[1] Lazarus, whom Jesus loves, is lying sick at Bethany; and his sisters, Mary and Martha, of whom Mary is specially dwelt upon as the one who anointed the Lord's feet with ointment, send Him word of it. They need do nothing more than let Him know.

2 (5–16): the delay and death: the shadow of death.

2 Now Jesus loved * Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When, therefore he heard that he was sick, he [m]abode still two days in the place where he was. Then, after these things, he saith to his disciples, Let us go into Judea again. The disciples say unto him, Rabbi, the Jews [but] now sought to [n]stone thee, and goest thou thither again? Jesus answered them, Are there not twelve hours in the day? if any one walk in the

m cf. Matt. 15. 23. cf. Lk. 18. 7.

n ch. 10. 31.

*Ἠγάπα, stronger than the other word.

The after-circumstances cannot but remind us of the story of Jairus' daughter in the synoptic Gospels, in which also there was delay upon the road, and when He came the child was dead; the greater miracle of resurrection followed also in this case. The typical meaning is made plain there by that other story of her who touched in faith the border of His garment, while He was on the way, and was healed of her bloody issue. Even so, while on His way to raise dead Israel, as He yet will do, He is detained by the faith of the Gentiles which claims and draws virtue from Him.

Underneath this dispensational view there lies a universal application in which the two miracles are but different sides of the one story of salvation. From the human side, faith lays hold of Christ, and finds the virtue that is in Him. From the divine side, man is seen to be dead, and must have life. Israel's state nationally only pictures the condition of men at large.

These meanings may perhaps co-exist in the story of Lazarus (or Eleazar, "the Mighty One is helper") of Bethany (the "house of humiliation"). The names alone tell a story of where the help of the Mighty One is found. Israel will find it there in the day that is to come. But that the deeper and at the same time wider application is that which is most in the line of truth before us here needs no argument. Although there are in John, as we have seen, supplementary glances at Israel's condition, yet the deeper and therefore universal view of man as man is what is the general truth, and that as the basis for the announcement of higher and Christian blessings.

Lazarus is sick; and, though Jesus loves him,—nay, even because He does,—Lazarus must die; yet his sickness is "not unto death,"—has not that in view as its end,—"but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." The blessing of the creature is not forgotten in this, but established; for it is in this pre-eminently that God is glorified. On the Urim and Thummim of the high priest's breast-plate, the "lights and perfections" (typically) of God Himself, are written the names of the tribes of Israel; and these again, for us, are the typical expression of the Christian in his various characters. "I am glorified in them," says the Lord of glory; and He who is thus glorified in them will glorify them with Himself.

Mary's anointing of Him is not forgotten here: the "exalted one," as her name denotes, is best known as that in her exaltation of Him. Wherever the gospel is preached is this told for a memorial of her. Here it is mentioned anticipatively, though it will be again given in its place historically.

2 Jesus loves them all, these disciples of His, and remains where He is two days still, as if the news of this sickness had not affected Him. But now He says, to the surprise of those who after all knew Him so little, "Let us go into Judea again." When they object that the Jews had sought to stone Him, He simply refers them to the twelve hours of the day, in which without stumbling man could walk. He, in fact, was the light of the world while in it; full light for those that followed Him. Apart from that they might stumble; for the light was not in themselves. And then He tells them, not of His present safety from the men of Judea, but of the purpose which, without needing to think of them at all, drew Him there at this time. "Our friend Lazarus," He says, finding

day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the °light of this world; but if any one walk in the night, he stumbleth, because the light is not in him. These things said he, and after this he saith, Our friend Lazarus is fallen ᵖasleep; but I go, that I may ᵍawake him out of sleep. The disciples therefore said unto him, Lord, if he have fallen asleep, he will be healed. Now Jesus had spoken of his death; but they thought that he spake of the rest of sleep. Jesus therefore then said plainly, Lazarus hath died; and I am ʳglad for your sakes that I was not there, that ye may believe; nevertheless let us go to him. Then said ˢThomas, who is called Didymus,* unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

3 (17-46): the resurrection.
a (17-27): the Personal Life.

3 (*a*) When therefore Jesus came, he found that he had

o *cf.* ch. 9. 4. *cf.* ch. 7. 30.

p *cf.* Matt. 9. 24. *cf.* Acts 7. 60. *cf.* Matt. 27. 52.

q *cf.* 1 Thess. 4. 13–17.

r *cf.* ch. 9. 3. *cf.* 2 Cor. 12. 9, 10.

s *cf.* ch. 14. 5. *cf.* ch. 20. 24–29.

* The Hebrew and Greek respectively for "Twin."

a motive for them also in the affection in which their hearts accompany His own, "Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." He talks so quietly they do not understand Him; for the shadow of death is upon all their souls, but the thought of sleep is not even a shadow. "Lord," they say, "if he have fallen asleep, he will be healed." Then He descends to their common language: "Lazarus hath died; and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that ye may believe:"—how little like faith was their present mood!—"nevertheless let us go to him." Thomas breaks out with a love which has not emerged yet from the shadow, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him."

3 (*a*) How monotonous and tedious in its night-like uniformity is the spirit of unbelief! specially, as we see it here, not in the outside world, which has rejected Christ, but among those who yet have, spite of all, received Him, and cling to Him. We are permitted here to see how heavily the cloud hangs before we see it lift and scatter: for the Life is come; and the Life is the Light of men.

We find the Saviour now come to Bethany, where Lazarus had been already four days in the tomb. Martha, foremost always in her activity, meets Him outside the village, with a confession at once of her faith and her disappointment: "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." In what follows, her emotion, excited by His presence, goes beyond her actual faith, as the result shows: "But even now I know that whatsoever Thou shalt ask of God, God will give it Thee." The Lord tests her at once with the assurance of a joy too great for her: "Thy brother shall rise again." She sinks at once into mere orthodoxy: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." The Lord replies in the memorable words that have comforted so many since: "*I* am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and every one who liveth and believeth on Me shall *never* die."

Here then is He in whom resides the power of resurrection and of a life not subject to death. Resurrection comes first, and is that which would appeal to Martha in her present condition. Of life untouched by death she could think only as a future thing, to follow this when in its full reality it should be come. But the Lord applies it to the then present time, dividing this from the past by the presence of Himself now come for the annulling of death. He that believed on Him, though having died, death should be annulled for him: he should live again, and live eternally. But for the believer now alive, this power over death would at once manifest itself; and here He makes it plain that He is speaking of no special, exceptional class: "*every one* who liveth and believeth on Me shall never die."

been already four days in the tomb. Now Bethany was [t]nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to [u]comfort them concerning their brother. When Martha therefore heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary [v]sat in the house. Martha therefore said unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died; but [w]even now I know that whatsoever thou shalt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the [x]resurrection at the last day. Jesus

t cf. Lk. 24. 50.

u vers. 31, 33, 36, 37, 45.

v cf. Lk. 10. 39.

w cf. vers. 39, 40.

x cf. Lk. 14. 14. *cf.* Acts 23. 8.

The difficulty of the passage has been such to some as to make them think of the Lord's coming as the time when it would be fulfilled. When He comes again the dead in Him will be raised, the living believer, changed into His image, will never die. There will certainly be the most perfect fulfilment of what is said here. But on the other hand, there is nothing but such a fulfilment to make us think of such a postponement of it to the future, which is quite in opposition to the division of time which the Lord is making: "every one that liveth and believeth"—*now;* not shall be living and believing at My return: of which He is not saying a word here.

As for the present application the apostle does not hesitate to say that God according to His own purpose and grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the age-times,* "now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, has abolished" (or "annulled") "death, and brought life and incorruption" (not "immortality") "to light by the gospel" (1 Tim. i. 9, 10). This is the inspired application of the Lord's words here, which it makes perfectly plain. In the past death *was*,—a shadow over souls, such as we see it in the previous part of the chapter, such as we find it in the wail of a Hezekiah, or in Job's picture of "a land of darkness, as darkness itself and . . . where the light is as darkness" (Job x. 22). But now with the Life is come the Light; and the shadow of death is penetrated by it. He that had the power of death is met and vanquished, the captives are freed (Heb. ii. 14, 15).

There is, however, in the Lord's words here, that anticipative character which we have seen so much in John. He Himself was even then, as He is just about to show, the "resurrection and the life,"; yet this anticipates that death of His through which alone the power of death could be annulled. In Him the Eternal Life was to pass through death, not to be enfeebled even for a moment by it, but the reverse: to gain thereby a new energy for the deliverance of those now to receive it, which should make it that "abundant" life of which we have heard the glorious Giver speak. The time had not yet come to utter it fully, and we must go on to the epistles of Paul to find the doctrine in its full development. But here is the root of it. He that is quickened of God now is "quickened together with Christ, and raised up together" (Eph. ii. 5, 6): the virtues of that death out of which alone is life attach to the life communicated. For those who have it, death in the reality of this is behind and not before them; the storm of judgment is behind and not before: that which is before is the pathway of light in which the risen Christ is ascended to glory, the Representative-Head, and Forerunner of His people. For the full development of this, as has been said, we must wait for him whose gospel is in his own description of it, "the gospel of the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 4, *Gk*), whom the Spirit of truth was pleased to use

*In the common version, "before the world began"; in the revised, "before eternal times," but "times" cannot be "eternal." The fact is that the word (αἰῶν) of which this is the adjectival form has two meanings: one being "age," by which in the plural it is always translated; while the other is "eternity" proper, a later use. The mere fact of its being plural in this case decides for its being rendered as I have rendered it, "the age-times."

said unto her, [y]I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth on me, though he have [z]died, shall live; and every one who liveth and believeth on me shall [a]*never* die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord; I believe that [b]thou art the Christ, the Son of God, who should come into the world.

b (28-38): sympathy.

(*b*) And when she had said this, she went away and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Teacher is come and calleth thee. And she, when she heard it, arose quickly and came to him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the village, but was still at the place where Martha met him. The Jews therefore, who were with her in the house and comforted her, seeing that Mary rose up quickly, and went out, followed her, thinking, She is going to the tomb, to weep there. Mary therefore, when she came where Jesus was, and saw him, fell at his feet, saying unto him, [c]Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. Jesus therefore, when he saw her [d]weeping, and the Jews weeping, who had come with her, was deeply moved in spirit, and troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him? They say unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus [e]wept. The Jews therefore said, See how he loved* him. But some of them said, Could not this man, who [f]opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that this man also

y *cf.* ch. 5. 21. *cf.* ch. 6. 39, 40. *cf.* Rev. 1. 18.
z *cf.* ch. 5. 28. *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 22, 23.
a *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 51-57. *cf.* ch. 21. 22.
b *cf.* Matt. 16. 16. *cf.* ch. 6. 68, 69.
c ver. 21.
d *cf.* Acts 8. 2.
e *cf.* Heb. 4. 15. *cf.* Lk. 19. 41.
f ch. 9. 6, 7.

* ἐφιλει, the love of a friend.

for the ministry of this; but we shall find the Lord in John steadily leading us on in this direction, until He finally commends us to the Spirit of truth to teach us what as yet they could not bear (xvi. 12, 13).

Martha shows us this in her answer to the Lord here. When He asks of her, "Believest thou *this?*" she can only answer, with true faith but without understanding of the blessedness contained in the words she has just listened to, "Yea, Lord, I believe that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, that should *come into the world.*" True, and a glorious truth; but it is not that of which He has been speaking.

(*b*) Evidently she has the consciousness of this: for immediately she leaves Him, and goes in search of a better scholar. She who has learnt so much at the feet of Jesus, she—it seems as if she said—will understand the better what this means. So she goes and calls Mary her sister secretly, and says: "The Teacher is come, and calleth for thee." Mary, who seems to have been waiting for a positive call, thereupon rises quickly and comes to Him. The Jews, who had come out from Jerusalem to comfort as best they might the afflicted sisters, follow her, as they suppose, to the tomb, and find themselves instead in the presence of Jesus.

Mary is unconscious of them now. She falls at His feet with a stronger emotion than has been manifested in Martha, but only to repeat in her sister's words what they had evidently often said to one another, that if He had but been there, their brother would not have died. There, unlike Martha, she stops and says no more. She sees no way, and cannot speak as if she did. Let the lips she has listened to so often speak for Him and her. And here the Lord is moved as we do not read of His being before. As He looks upon the weepers round Him, He is deeply moved in spirit, and His words move on to action. "Where have ye laid him?" He asks. And when they bid Him "come and

should not have died? Jesus therefore, again deeply moved within himself, cometh to the tomb.

c (38-45): the glory of God.

(*c*) It was a cave, and a [g]stone lay upon it. Jesus saith, Take away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, already he [h]stinketh; for it is the fourth* day. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou shouldst believe, thou wouldst see the [i]glory of God? They took away the stone, therefore, and Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou [j]hearest me always, but on account of the multitude that [k]stand around I said it; that they also may believe that thou hast sent me. And having said this, he [l]cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth! And the dead came forth, bound feet and hands with [m]grave-clothes, and his face was bound round with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, [n]Loose him, and let him go.

Many, therefore, of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what he had done, [o]believed on him; but some of them went away to the Pharisees, and [p]told them what Jesus had done.

g *cf.* Matt. 27. 60, 66.

h *ctr.* Acts 13. 36, 37.

i ver. 4. *cf.* ch. 17. 4. *cf.* ch. 2. 11.

j *cf.* ch. 8.29. *cf.* ver. 22.

k *cf.* ch. 12. 29, 30.

l *cf.* ch. 5.25. *cf.* Matt.8.8.

m *ctr.*ch.20. 5–7. *cf.*Gal.4.10. *cf.*Col.2.20–23.

n *cf.* Rom. 8. 2. *cf.* Gal. 5.1. *cf.* Acts 18. 25, 26.

o *cf.* ch.8.30, 31. *cf.* Acts 9. 42.

p *cf.*ch.5.15.

* Or, "he is (dead) four days."

see," His tears are restrained no longer: "Jesus wept." Precious sympathy of One whose consciousness of power does not prevent His entering into the sorrows He is relieving; who in His wonders of divine power was still the Man Christ Jesus, and "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses."

The Jews take notice of His grief, and say, "See how He loved him;" while with some it wakes the inquiry, has He then, like others, nothing but His tears to give him? He opened the eyes of the blind; and could He not prevent this man dying? Then again He is deeply moved within Himself, as He feels the unbelief which everywhere follows Him. And now He is at the tomb.

(*c*) It is a cave; and a stone lies at the mouth of it. And now the unbelief of Martha would oppose the removal of the stone: of what use can it be to bring to light a man four days buried? of what but to turn a sweet if sad memory into an offence? But the only offence is the unbelief that will retain him in the tomb, and shut out from the soul, as the Lord reminds her, the glory of the living, omnipotent God.

He is now then face to face with death, and in view of the multitude gathered there, He thanks the Father that He has heard Him, and as One always hearing Him; expressly referring to that assemblage there in unbelief, but who may be brought to believe. In that confidence, and in attestation of such oneness always with the Father, He calls aloud for Lazarus to "come forth!"

How that multitude of eyes must have peered into the darkness; and what a hush of expectation must have fallen upon the crowd, as they strained every sense to catch the issue of such a pledging of God to a miracle like this. Jairus' daughter had but just died; the widow's son at Nain was but on his way to burial; but here was one who in that quick southern clime must have been already far sunk into corruption, and God pledged by One professing to be *always* heard by Him to bring him up!

And the pledge is redeemed! Shambling forward, as one bound up yet in the habiliments of death, Lazarus obeys the call and comes—a living man. He has recrossed the boundary-line which none of himself or by mere human aid has ever come back over. He has come back a witness to the Resurrection and the

2 (xi. 47-xii): The Death in which is life.
1 (xi. 47-xii. 8): anticipations.
a xi. 47-52): man's plea and God's foundation.

2. [1] (*a*) The chief priests, therefore, and the Pharisees gathered a [q]council, and said, What are we doing? for this man [r]doeth many signs. If we let him thus alone, [s]all will believe on him; and the [t]Romans will come and take away both our place and nation. But a certain one of them, [u]Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all; nor consider that it is profitable for us* that [v]one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this he spake not of himself, but being high priest that year, he [w]prophesied that one man should die for the nation; and not for that nation only, but also that he should [x]gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

*Many read "you."

q cf. Matt. 26. 3. *cf.* ch. 9. 22.
r cf. ch. 12. 19. *cf.* Acts 4. 16. *cf.* ch. 3. 19.
s cf. ch. 6. 15. *cf.* ch. 18. 36, 37. *ctr.* ch. 19. 12-15.
t cf. Acts 16. 13, 14. *cf.* Acts 21. 28.
u cf. Matt. 26. 3.
v ch. 18. 14. *cf.* Is. 53. 8.
w cf. Nu. 27. 21. *cf.* Num. 23. 7-10.
x cf. ch. 10. 16; *cf.* Rom. i. 16; *cf.* Is. 49. 6; *cf.* Ps. 22. 27.

Life, that the Son of God may be glorified in him. He has come back, a challenge thrown in the face of Christ's would-be murderers, of the possibility of success against One to whom death and the grave are subject. He has come back to walk in the power of such a victory, the type and pattern of that resurrection-life which "every one that liveth and believeth on Him" is called now to enjoy. In such a life is God indeed glorified. In such a life is power over the world attained. In men taken out of the world, sanctified and sent into it again, to represent Him in it as He did the Father.

"Loose him and let him go," is now the enfranchizing word. The will of the Lord is that those who have received life from Him should enjoy it in all its blessed freedom, delivered from the grave-clothes of Judaism, meant to put on men the stamp of death, and not of life. "Loose him and let him go," is the Lord's word now to the evangelist and to the teacher. Let the law do its work thoroughly upon the life of flesh and nature; and let the Cross confirm the lesson of the end of human strength, human wisdom, human will; but let the man in Christ be free as the light and air of heaven to which now he belongs: not in bondage but in freedom can the Son of God be glorified; and everywhere there rings through the New Testament the echo of His own words here, "Loose him and let him go."

The result of the miracle is that, on the one hand, many believe; on the other, word is brought to the Pharisees, and stirs more than ever the animosity which seeks the life of Christ.

2. [1] Here then the second part begins, in which we find the need of that Death out of which alone for us the resurrection-life can come. Anticipations of it and of its fruit start up in unlikely places. A Sadducean high-priest prophesies unwittingly, God overruling the heartless suggestion of human expediency to give testimony to the unique value of His Son's work which then goes beyond it. On the other hand, Christ has His own feast, the anticipation of what He can find in the company of His people. Out of worst evil is going to be the bud and fruitage of fullest good; and God shall be supreme over all, His glory everywhere manifest.

(*a*) We find then the Pharisees in council with the chief priests, men of a different creed and interests, but with whom they could make common cause against Christ. They have to confess that He whom they are unrelentingly pursuing "doeth many signs." Their only argument from this is that if they let Him alone, all men will believe on Him, and the Romans will take away their place and nation. This brings forward Caiaphas, who rebukes them for their inability to make so simple a calculation as that between the value of one man and a nation. He does not speak of *right* but of *profit*, and claims this for

b (53-57): withdrawal and expectancy.

(*b*) From that day therefore, they took counsel that they might kill him. Jesus therefore no longer walked [y]openly among the Jews, but went away thence into a country near the desert, to a city called Ephraim and there abode with the disciples. Now the [z]passover of the Jews was nigh, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the passover, that they might [a]purify themselves. They [b]sought Jesus therefore, and said among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye? that he will not come to the feast? And the chief priests and Pharisees had given commandment that if any one knew where he was, he should make it known, that they might [c]take him.

c (xii.1-3): a feast for Him.

(*c*) Jesus therefore, six days before the passover, came to [d]Bethany, where Lazarus was whom Jesus raised from among the dead. There therefore they made him a

y ch. 7. 1.

z ch. 6. 4. ch. 2. 13. *cf.* ch. 5. 1.

a *cf.* ch. 18. 28. *cf.* Num. 9. 10-13. *cf.* 2 Chron. 30. 17-20. *cf.* Is. 29. 13.

b ch. 7. 11.

c *cf.* Matt. 26. 14-16. ch. 18. 2, 3.

d ch. 11. 1.

his own side of the account. Nor does he realize the blinding nature of self-interest, nor question the competence of his conclusion in the least. His arithmetic is so simple it can hardly be worked wrong.

Notice how, when God puts His seal upon all this, the whole character of it changes. From God's side, this "profitable for *us*" becomes (of course) "profitable for *you;*" the self-interest that in the first case distorts and spoils everything becomes a glorious manifestation of divine love, which can then only consist with fullest righteousness. "The Son of man must be lifted up," that this profit may be realized: if it were not divine righteousness itself, Love could not give up its Beloved to it.

Thus Israel's blessing is secured; but there is a purpose beyond this in the death of Christ that the evangelist from his standpoint cannot fail to notice. He is not going to die "for that nation only, but also that He might gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." As the Shepherd had sheep not of the Jewish fold, so the Father had children not of that family. As not all in the fold were the Shepherd's sheep, so not all the family of Israel were God's family. The law which gendered to bondage could not mark out or gather the children of God. Adoption could not be enjoyed under it: the real children were as servants and not sons. God was saying, "I am a Father to *Israel*," not to those born of the Spirit, and children of God indeed. The moment He acts upon this latter principle, the old distinction is given up, and the children that Judaism scattered abroad are gathered.

Thus John keeps steadily to his theme, eternal life and what accompanies its possession, now that it is manifested. Of the Church he does not speak; but of the family; unity with him is unity of life, and so in the Father and the Son.

(*b*) The Lord being thus rejected, and His death determined, He withdraws from those who are compassing it to a country near the desert, to a city called Ephraim, and remains there with His disciples. This too seems an anticipation of what is coming, when withdrawn from Israel, and found among disciples only, He really withdraws for "double fruit," which "Ephraim" means.

Among the Jews, gathering in preparation for their passover, there is expectation with uncertainty, while the malice of His enemies is planning for His death.

(*c*) Six days before the passover, He is at Bethany again, in the midst of that little company who had in so remarkable a way been witnesses of His glory, and who show us that believing remnant which, while Israel rejected Him, gathered around Him. These are soon to be the commencement of that Christian gathering which in John has been already variously foreshadowed. Here they make Him a feast, as once (and only once) before, Matthew the publican

[e] feast, and [f] Martha served; but Lazarus was one of those at [g] table with him. [h] Mary then having taken a pound of ointment of pure spikenard, very costly, anointed the feet of Jesus, and [i] wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was [j] filled with the odour of the ointment.

d (xii. 4-8): tested.

(*d*) Now [k] Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, who was about to deliver him up, saith, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence,* and given to the poor? But this he said, not that he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a [l] thief, and had the bag, and carried what was put in it. Jesus said therefore, Suffer her to have kept it for the day of my burial. For the poor ye have always with you, but [m] me ye have not always.

2 (xii. 9-19): testimony and conflict.

[2] The great [n] multitude of the Jews, therefore, knew that he was there; and they came, not on account of Jesus only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he raised from among the dead. But the chief priests took counsel that they might [o] kill Lazarus also; because that on his account many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

* "Denarii," as elsewhere.

cf. ch. 13. 33. *n* ver. 12; *cf.* Mk. 12. 37. *o cf.* ch. 9. 34; *cf.* ch. 15. 20.

e Matt.26.6-13. *cf.* Lk.5.29-32. *cf.*ch.4.7,31, 32.
f cfr. Lk.10. 40, 41. *cf.*Matt.11. 29, 30.
g cf. Mk. 5. 43. *cf.*Lk.15.23, 24.
h ch. 11. 2. *cf.* Lk.7.37, 38. *cf.* 1 Tim.1. 15-17. *cf.* Song 1. 3, 12-14.
i cf. Lk. 10. 39. *cf.*ch.11.32. *cf.*Matt.21. 8.
j cf. Ex. 40. 34, 35. *cf.*Acts 2.2.
k cf. Matt. 26. 8.
*l cf.*ch.13.29. *cf.* ch. 6. 70, 71.
m Mk. 14.7. ver. 35.

had made Him a feast, though with a very different company. There as the Saviour of sinners, Matthew had put Him in company with sinners; and a feast, we may be sure, that meant for Him. Here it is with saints that He is found, the fruit of His salvation, and typically on resurrection ground; and here service, communion, worship, have their representatives. Martha still serves; Lazarus is at table with Him; while Mary, entering more deeply into what is before Him, anoints Him for His burial. John alone names Mary here, as he alone points out the traitor as raising the murmuring against her, and that which moved him in it. John too speaks of the anointing of His feet, the other Gospels of that of His head. Here she is like the woman in the Pharisee's house, as in the wiping them with the hair of her head. John also tells us how the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Thus deeper appreciation on the part of the beloved disciple seems to flow from deeper communion with the Lord's own estimate (comp. Luke vii. 44, 46). How sweet to Him was that lavish expenditure of love which others counted waste. In the Synoptists the memorial of it goes out with the gospel; in John the odor abides in the house. Glorious testimony to a woman's act, such as we find recorded of no other. But she had learnt at His feet what she poured out there.

(*d*) This act of love brings out the traitor; and we have a glance at His previous history. What the other was pouring out on Him, he would have filched from Him. When he could do this no longer, he sold himself.

[2] Now we have the Lord's entry into Jerusalem as King of Israel. It naturally occupies in John a much smaller place than in the other Gospels. The elaborate preparation for it that we see in the others John has nothing of; nor is there the detail of the entry itself, the purification of the temple, nor the strife with Him on the part of the heads of the people, nor His solemn arraignment of them all. Nor have we the Olivet prophecy following. On the other hand, we have the effect of the resurrection of Lazarus, the testimony to Him of those in whom it had wrought, and on the other hand, the intensifying of the opposition by it. The fulfilment of Zechariah's prophecy is only realized by the disciples afterwards. All this is for John the history of a struggle, and the end of which is

On the morrow, a great multitude that came to the feast, having heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took [p] branches of palms and went out to meet him, and cried, Hosanna; [q] blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel. And Jesus having found a young ass, sat upon it, as it is [r] written, Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, thy King cometh, sitting upon an ass's colt. These things [s] knew not his disciples at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and that they did these things unto him. The multitude therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb, and raised him from among the dead, bare [t] witness. On this account also the multitude went to meet him, because they heard that he had done this sign. The Pharisees therefore said to one another, Ye see that ye profit nothing: behold, the [u] world is gone after him.

[2] (xii.20-33): glory displayed, fruit realized.

[3] Now there were certain [v] Greeks of those who came up to worship at the feast. These therefore came to

[p] Matt. 21.8-11. Mk. 11. 8-10. Lk. 19. 36-40. *cf.* Rev.7.9, 10.
[q] *cf.* Ps. 118. 25, 26.
[r] Matt. 21. 1-7. Zech. 9. 9.
[s] *cf.* ch.2.22. *cf.* ch. 13.7. *cf.*ch.14.26. *cf.*Lk.18.34.
[t] ver. 11. *cf.*Lk.19.37.
[u] *cf.* ch. 11. 47, 48.
[v] *cf.* Mk. 7. 26. *cf.* Acts 10. 34, 35. *cf.*ch.10.16. *cf.* Ps.72.9-11.

the Cross and the setting aside of Israel nationally. He marks it in connection with what follows here, which is peculiar to himself. For his purpose, he has no need to enlarge upon it. The coming up of the Greeks introduces once again what is his peculiar theme.

[3] The Greeks here are pure Gentiles and not Grecian Jews, although worshipers of the true God as revealed in Israel. As sharers of the hopes that Israel's prophets had aroused, they come forward, respectfully using the mediation of a disciple to gain an interview with Him. The mediation of a Jew was a perfectly natural thought for a Gentile believing in the prophets, where the Gentile seeking God, clings to the skirts of the Jew (Zech. viii. 23). As the centurion before used the Jewish elders, so the Greeks here would use Philip. He, with the caution of his people in such a matter, associates another with himself to approach his Master in the matter; and Andrew takes the lead in communicating their desire to the Lord. He at once declares that the hour is come that the *Son of man* should be glorified; using the title by which is indicated His link with man as Man.* As Son of man, all peoples, nations and languages are to serve Him, and in a Kingdom that shall not be destroyed (Dan. vii. 14).

The hour had not arrived, however, for the Kingdom here depicted; and it has not yet arrived; nor is the Son of man a title which He takes in relationship to the Church. But there was an hour just at hand for another, His strange, yet greatest glory, to be acquired by Him; and in which not His connection with Israel but His manhood place for men was for all eternity to make Him glorious. By the power of this work the Son of man lifted up was to draw all men to Him. In the value of it, the earth and all the dwellers in it will become His own. Without it man's ruined race could be but as a cinder-slag in the fire of God's wrath. He goes on immediately to speak of this necessity, therefore, in order to His own fruitfulness, affirming it as constantly in John with what is of deepest importance with the seal of His double "verily:" "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except the grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Nature is summoned here to show the law of increase which is stamped upon her; and that creative law is made an argument for the necessity of the death that is before Him. What an exaltation of the analogies in nature, to exhibit and use them

* Andrew, the "manly," is foremost in the introduction.

[w] Philip, who was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, Sir, we desire to see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew; and Andrew cometh and Philip, and they tell Jesus. And Jesus answereth them, saying, The hour hath come that the Son of man should be [x] glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except the grain of wheat fall into the ground and [y] die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it beareth [z] much fruit. He that [a] loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any one would serve* me, let him [b] follow me; and [c] where I

* διακονέω.

a Matt. 10. 39; Lk. 14. 26. b *cf.* ch. 13. 36-38; Matt. 16. 24. c ch. 14. 3; ch. 17. 24.

w ch. 1. 43, 44. ch. 14.8-11.
x *cf.* Lk.9.31, 51. *cf.* Matt.26. 53, 54.
y *cf.* Ex. 21. 3. *cf.* Matt.16. 21-23. *cf.* ch. 3.14, 15. *cf.* 1 Cor.15. 36.
z *cf.* Gen. 2. 18, 21-23. *cf.* ch.20.17 with Heb. 2. 11, 12.

in such a way as this! and what a means of interpreting nature itself is here given us! How it shows that Christ, ignored by the so-called "natural" theology, is the true key to the interpretation of nature, and that the Cross is stamped ineffaceably upon it. Nature is thus invested with the robe of a primæval prophet, and that the Word, who is God, is the Creator of all things becomes not merely the announcement of Scripture, but a plainly demonstrated fact before our eyes to-day.

The grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies: it has life in it, and it carries it with it through death itself. The death which it undergoes is in the interest even of the life, which it sets free from its encasement—from the limitations which hedge it in—to lay hold of and assimilate the surrounding material, by which it expands into the plant which is its resurrection, and thus at last into the many grains which are its resurrection-fruit. How plainly is this no accidental likeness which the Lord has seized for illustration of His point. It is as real a prediction as ever came from the lips of an Old Testament prophet: every seed sown in the ground to produce a harvest a positive prediction that the Giver of life must die. The union of Christ with men is not in incarnation, though that, of course, was a necessary step towards it. But the blessed Man, so come into the world, was a new, a Second Man, who could not unite with the old race, but becomes the Head of a new one, another—a "last Adam." Alone He was the life, and the Life was the Light of men; but if that were all the history would be summed in the words that follow: "And the light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehendeth it not. He was in the world . . . and the world knew Him not." To the dead life must be communicated, that there may be eyes to see. Men can only be born again into the family of God, of which the Son of God as Man is the beginning.

Yet the Life cannot simply communicate the life. Around Him are the bands of eternal righteousness, which has pronounced condemnation upon the guilty, and only by the satisfaction of righteousness in the penalty incurred can these bands be removed. Death—death as He endured it—alone can set Him free from these limitations: He is "straitened till it be accomplished." In resurrection He is enlarged, and becomes the Head of a new creation; and "if any man be in Christ, it is new creation" (2 Cor. v. 17). In those redeemed by His blood the tree of life has come to its precious fruitage.

Thus the Son of God goes forward to His death. These Greeks coming up show divine grace working. Mere King of the Jews He is not, but the Saviour of men; and the wide harvest coming in is claiming Him for the realization of its promise. The burden of the world is upon Him. Past, present and future centre in Him. The glory of God, the blessing of man, call on Him with a voice which He has heard long since in the height from which He has descended. Now from a lower and nearer point of view the depths appear of

am, there shall my servant* be; if any one serve† me, him will the Father [d]honor. Now is my soul [e]troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour‡? But on this [f]account came I to this hour. Father, [g]glorify thy name. There came therefore a [h]voice from heaven, I [i]have both glorified it, and [j]will glorify it again. The multitude therefore that stood and heard it, said that it thundered; others said, An [k]angel hath spoken to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not for my sake, but for [l]your sakes. Now is the [m]judgment of this world: now shall the [n]prince of

*διάκονος. †διακονέω, ‡Many omit the question.

[d] *cf.* 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. *cf.* ch. 14. 21, 23. *cf.* ch. 16. 27.
[e] *cf.* Matt. 26. 38, 39. *cf.* ch. 13. 21.
[f] *cf.* ch. 18. 37. *cf.* Heb. 10. 5-10.
[g] *cf.* Lk. 22. 42. *cf.* ch. 5. 30.
[h] *cf.* Matt. 3. 17. *cf.* Matt. 17. 5.
[i] *cf.* ch. 11. 40-42.
[j] *cf.* Rom. 6. 4; *cf.* Phil. 2. 11. [k] *cf.* Acts 23. 9. [l] ch. 11. 42. [m] *cf.* Gal. 6. 14. [n] *cf.* Matt. 12. 29. *cf.* ch. 14. 30; *cf.* Heb. 2. 14.

the abyss into which He must yet descend, that He may lay in it the eternal foundations which nothing shall shake again.

Each grain of wheat that is found on the parent plant follows of necessity by the law of its own nature the pattern of the grain from which it came. His people too must be prepared to follow Him upon the road on which He is going. "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. He that serveth Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be; if any one serve Me, him will the Father honor." Here is the rule, and here is the reward of service: to be with Christ, where He is, is such reward as love itself would seek, crowned with the honor which the Father puts upon such loving service. The way of attainment is by the path that He has trodden, and that way, in its general character at least, is unmistakably plain.

For Him, however, there was that which darkened the road, and made it what for us it never can be. What He has taken from ours was the intense sorrow of His; not mere death, nor even with all that the wickedness of man and the malignity of Satan could add to it of bitterness, but the awful reality of sin borne by Him in the midst of all this, and the penalty of it in its unrelieved intensity. The anticipation of this presses upon Him as He speaks: "Now is My soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour?" Nay, "for this cause came I to this hour." Relief could not be found in this direction: there was but one thing could give it, but one prayer possible: "Father, glorify Thy Name." To that immediately the answer comes: and in the hearing of the multitude: "there came a voice from heaven: I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." That was what the Son was here in the world for, and it was in open acceptance of the Son's work that the Father glorified His own name. In a special way this had been done in the resurrection of Lazarus; but it was to be done in a more signal manner, when "by the glory of the Father" Christ Himself would be raised from the dead (Rom. vi. 4).

Meanwhile this Voice came as His witness to the multitude. For Himself it could not be needed, who walked in a communion with God which was never broken. Alas, for them a Voice from heaven was a strange and, for the mass, an unintelligible sound. The multitude said, "It thundered." A few, who still did not clearly recognize it, said, "An angel has spoken to Him." The Lord replies, It is for your sakes and not Mine; and then warns them that the world's judgment is at hand in that which He is looking on to. His death at its hands would indeed be its condemnation. Its chosen prince was not the true, but the usurper; to be cast out yet by the power of that which He was accomplishing by its means. The Son of Man was to be lifted up from the earth, the witness of His rejection by men, yet of the curse borne for them: of which the final result in the new earth would be, all men drawn to Him by its sweet beneficent power, even now the attractive centre for the myriads of the redeemed.

this world be cast out. And I, if I be [o]lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he was about to die.

[4] (34-43): the testing.

[4] The multitude therefore answered him, We have heard out of the law, that the [p]Christ abideth for ever; and how sayest thou that the Son of man must be lifted up? [q]who *is* this Son of man? Jesus therefore said unto them, Yet a [r]little while is the light among you: walk while ye have the light, that the darkness may not overtake you. And he that walketh in the darkness [s]knoweth not whither he goeth: while ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may [t]become sons* of light.

These things spake Jesus; and departing, [u]hid himself from them. But [v]though he had done so great signs before them, yet they believed not on him: that the word of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he said, [w]Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of [the] Lord been revealed? For this cause they could not believe, because Esaias said again, He hath [x]blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, because† he [y]saw

*Not children, as is usual in John. †Many read "when."

o ch. 3. 14. ch. 8. 28. *cf.* Rom.5.8. *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 19.

p *cf.* Ps. 72. 17. *cf.* Is. 9. 7. *cf.* Ps. 102. 23-27.

q *cf.* ch.8.25. *cf.* ch. 5. 27

r ch. 7. 33.

s *cf.* Jer. 13. 16. *cf.* ch. 11. 9, 10. *ctr.* 1 Thess. 5. 4

t *cf.* Eph.5.8. *cf.* 1 Pet.2.9. *cf.* Col.1.12.

u ch. 8. 59.

v *cf.* ch.11.47 -53. *cf.* ch.10.38.

w Is. 53. 1. Rom.10.16.

x *cf.* Is.6.10. *cf.* Matt.13. 14, 15. *cf.* ch. 8. 43 with 2 Thess. 2. 11, 12.

y Is. 6. 1-8.

Thus it is His heart relieves itself. The glory of God, the overthrow of evil, the redemption and reconciliation of men, is to be accomplished by that, the cost of which is to be for Him so much. He weighs the gain against the purchase-price for Him, and is content.

[4] There follows here again, as so constantly in John, that conflict of unbelief with the truth which reveals so perfectly the condition of man. The moral disease which cleaves to him is the very thing which makes the remedy so distasteful. Above all, the Cross is utterly an offence; and fullest grace of God is refused for its incompatibility with the self-righteousness of man. The Jews take up this affirmation that the Son of man must be lifted up, which they rightly enough interpret of His death, to put it in contrast with what the law has declared. The Christ according to it abides forever; and how can this be consistent with the Son of man being lifted up? Who is He then, this Son of man? But the Lord does not directly answer them. For their state of heart is not reached by the formal answer of a question. He simply presses on them the speedy passing of the opportunity which they now had. The light would be soon taken from them, except by their availing themselves of it they make it their own. When the darkness came, they would lose the way indeed; acceptance of the light while yet they had it would make them sons of the light, in whom the light would be as nature.

With these words He is gone again out of their midst, and hidden from them. He had wrought so many signs among them, and they had only fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy of a people given up to hardening. The moral glory of His suffering and humiliation had only, being such as they were, blinded their eyes; and His grace published had but hardened their heart, so as to make it impossible for them to see or understand, to be converted and healed. These things Isaiah said, as seeing in the glory of Jehovah displayed in the temple the glory of Christ: for Christ is the Word, in whom alone God has ever displayed Himself; and in

his glory; and he spake of him. Although indeed from among the [z]rulers also, many believed on him, but on account of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be [a]put out of the synagogue: for they [b]loved glory from* men rather than glory from* God.

[5] (44-50): responsibility attaching to the light.

[5] And Jesus cried aloud, and said, He that believeth on me believeth not on me, but on him that [c]sent me; and he that beholdeth me [d]beholdeth him that sent me. I am come [as] [e]light into the world, that every one who believeth on me may not abide in darkness. And if any one hear my words and believe them not, I [f]judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to [g]save the world. He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath what judgeth him: the [h]word which I have spoken, *that* shall judge him at the last day. Because I spake not from myself, but the Father who sent me, he hath given me [i]commandment what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is [j]life eternal: what things therefore I speak, even as the Father hath said unto me, so I speak.

z *cf.* ch.7.48. *cf.* ch. 3.1. *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 26.
a *cf.*ch.9.22, 34. *cf.* Heb. 13. 10-13.
b *cf.* ch.5.44. *ctr.*Rom.1. 16. *cf.* 2 Tim.1. 8.
c *cf.* ch.5.24. *cf.*Mk.9.37.
d ch. 14. 9. *cf.* ch. 1. 14, 18. *cf.*Col.1.15.
e ch. 1. 4, 5. *cf.* ch. 8. 12. vers. 35,36.
f *cf.* ch. 5.45. *cf.* ch. 8. 15, 26. *cf.* Lk. 12. 14.
g *cf.*ch.3.17. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 19. *cf.* Rev. 20. 11-15.
h *cf.* Deut. 18. 18, 19. *cf.*Matt.25. 31-46.
i *cf.*ch.10.18. *cf.*ch.14.31.

* Literally, "of."

cf. ch. 15. 10; *cf.* ch. 3. 34. j *cf.* ch. 6. 63 with ch. 17. 8.

the Man Christ Jesus this display is at last fully made. But how could the Pharisaic Jew, ignorant of himself and God alike, recognize the One in the Other?

Yet the evidence was abundant; so that among the chief rulers many believed. Their reason was convinced, but their hearts were unchanged, and the consequences of confessing Him were too serious: they desired the glory that men could bestow rather than the glory which God could give: the fatal choice of alas how many!

[5] The Evangelist brings forward, therefore, here the emphatic words of Jesus which proclaim the responsibility attaching to the light which had shone among them.

Light indeed it was, the revelation of God in His true character, so that to believe on Him was to believe on Him who sent Him forth, to behold Him was to behold the One from whom He came. There was no side interest to divert any from the true and living God He represented.

His mission also was the appealing, attractive mission of salvation, and not of judgment. There was everything in it to win, rather than repel. Yet in the last day, that sweet and winning message would witness against the rejector of it all the more surely. Ah, says the apostle, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation!

And in all this, nothing was spoken from Himself, but all according to a commandment given Him of the Father. He knew it in its outcome, its meaning for man—eternal life! and spoke it in the joy of communion with it,—with Him who sent it.

So the message ends: here is the responsibility of him who hears it. Henceforth, until as the Lamb of sacrifice He again appears among the people, He is shut up in the company of His own, to communicate to them His last words of guidance and overflowing love, for the impending time of His absence from them: a legacy which has never been exhausted yet; and of which, live as freely on it as we will, we shall find it hard to exhaust even the daily income.

SUBDIVISION 4. (Chaps. xiii.–xvii.)

Mercy for the path.

SECTION 1. (Chap. xiii. 1–17.)

With all power His, and faithful to those given Him, He maintains them in righteousness.

NOW before the [k]feast of the passover, Jesus knowing that the [l]hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own that were in the world, [m]loved them [n]unto the end.* And when supper was begun, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to deliver him up, he knowing that the Father had [o]given all things into his hands, and that he was [p]come from God and was [q]going to God, riseth from supper, and [r]layeth aside his garments, and taking a towel, [s]girded himself. Then he poureth [t]water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' [u]feet, and to [v]wipe them with the towel with which he was girded.

k *cf.* Matt. 26. 2, etc. *cf.* ch. 12. 1.
l *cf.* ch. 7. 8. *cf.* ch. 12. 23. *cf.* ch. 17. 1.
m ver. 34. ch. 10. 11. *cf.* Song. 8. 7.
n *cf.* Gen. 28. 15. *cf.* ch. 10. 28-30. *cf.* Rom. 8. 35-39.
o *cf.* ch. 5. 20-23. *cf.* ch. 17. 2.
p ch. 8. 42. ch. 16. 28.
q *cf.* ch. 17. 11. *cf.* ch. 20. 17.
r *cf.* Lk. 22. 27. *cf.* Phil. 2. 7, 8.
s *cf.* Matt. 20. 28. *cf.* Lk. 12. 37.

* Or, "to the uttermost."

t *cf.* Eph. 5. 26; *cf.* ch. 15. 3. u *cf.* Ex. 40. 30-32; *cf.* Ps. 119. 9. v *cf.* 2 Cor. 2. 6-8; *cf.* 1 Sa. 2. 7; *cf.* Ps. 23. 3.

SUBD. 4.

Israel has now fully manifested her unbelief, and the Lord has been dwelling upon His lifting up at their hands,—on their parts, the most complete and contemptuous rejection, though to be overruled of God for widest blessing. He was going back to the Father, the glorious work being fully accomplished for which He had come. That accomplishment has been indeed anticipated all through the Gospel, as we have seen. Apart from it no blessing at all could have been for man; and the hands to which it had been committed were fully competent. God could own from the beginning with the most open testimony His delight in Him, even as upon the Cross itself He could turn away His face from Him who in human weakness hung there, and leave Him unassisted to the struggle and the victory, upon which hung all the issues of eternity. *He* was to be thus the "Father of eternity" (Isa. ix. 6; Heb.) which was to take shape and pattern in the womb of the Cross.

Now He stood on the eve of His actual departure. One brief awful moment past, Heaven beckoned Him; the glory from which He had come was hailing Him back; the Father's greeting of His Royal Priest,—the Father's throne awaited Him: all things were in His hand; yet He has upon earth an interest that detains Him, which in the glory of God is to occupy Him still. He is leaving upon earth the chosen companions of His path; those indeed that have hardly ever understood Him,—whose lack of sympathy has been itself one of the bitterest trials, of those that made Him the "Man of sorrows" that He was. Yet they are His hard-won spoils from the hand of the enemy,—the first-fruits of the spiritual harvest coming in. They are His own, the gift of His Father, the work of His Spirit, the purchase of His blood, by and by to tell out and for the ages to come, divine love and power to all His intelligent creation. Nor, spite of their feebleness, can He forget how their hearts awakened by His call, have clung to Him in the scene of His rejection, how they have left their little all to follow Him. Now He is going to leave them in that world whose enmity they must for His sake incur, and in which they would fill up that which was behind of His afflictions for His body's sake, which is the Church (Col. i. 24). In human tenderness His heart overflows towards them, while in divine fulness; and this is what we find before us now. It is peculiar to John, and furnishes them for the way, and arms them for the impending conflict.

Then cometh he to Simon Peter. *He* saith unto him, Lord, dost [w]thou wash *my* feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou [x]knowest not now; but thou shalt know* [y]afterwards. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast [z]no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my [a]hands and my head. Jesus saith unto him, He that is [b]bathed needeth not save to wash his [c]feet, but is clean [d]every whit; and ye are clean, but [e]not all. For he knew who would deliver him up: therefore said he unto them, Ye are not all clean.

w *cf.* ch. 16. 21-23.
x *cf.* vers.12, 36. *cf.* ch.12.16. *cf.* Heb.12. 11.
y *cf.* ch. 21. 15-19. *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 25.
z *cf.* Gen.35. 2, 3. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 1, 2. *cf.* Eph. 4. 30-32.
a *cf.* Rom.4. 4, 5. *ctr.* Ps.26.6.
b *cf.* Heb.10. 22; *cf.* Tit. 3. 5.
c *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 6; *cf.* 2 Cor. 7. 1.
d *cf.* 1 Cor. 6. 11; *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 30; *cf.* 1 Jno. 3. 9.
e ver. 18; ch. 6. 70.

* or, "understand."

This therefore is the true wilderness section of the Gospel,—not the history of the wilderness, but the preparation for it; what is to it as the early part of Numbers to the latter part. Alas, such a history was to follow,—and has followed; yet in which divine grace has abounded over human failure. So must it ever be.

Sec. 1.

The order of Scripture is a point of special importance. So we shall find it here. Grace reigns through righteousness. Righteousness must be maintained or God, who in all His acts must be consistent with himself, cannot give way to the love which is in His nature. This is seen in the Cross, but it remains a principle in all God's dealings with His people. We "call on Him as Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work" (1 Pet. i. 17). The Father's character must be maintained with His own children; and they must be taught to act in conformity with it. Our "Advocate with the Father" also is "Jesus Christ the righteous," One who can no more forget righteousness than He can forget the people He has redeemed. It is not, of course, as Advocate we see Him here; because plainly it is not with the Father that we see Him, but with His people. Yet He is anticipatively the Risen and Ascended One, with all things given into His hands. It is in this character He acts, in a love that cannot give up its objects, and which recognizes it as a first necessity for them that they should be conformed to His nature and ways.

They are to have part with Him; but what does this involve as to those in such a place of defilement as this world is, and with so great susceptibility to defilement in it? His action in view of all this is quite easy of interpretation, spite of the many who have seen in it only a lesson of humility, and indeed the institution of an ordinance to remind of this. But the Lord Himself assures us that there is a deeper meaning than this, for Peter certainly knew what the Lord was doing, if there were no more than this; but the Lord says that at present he did not know; but that he should know afterwards. The doing to others by the disciples as He had done to them would necessarily depend also upon their knowledge of what He had done; which, if it were to receive spiritual interpretation, would make what was enjoined on them to be of a similar character.

But Christ's cleansing of His Church is, as the apostle tells us, with washing of water by the Word (Eph. v. 26); and this at once throws light on the deeper meaning. It is as we well know, only as so cleansed that we can, as the Lord says to Peter again, "have part with Him." Thus all is as clear as can be. No ordinance could accomplish this; and we immediately perceive the primary importance of this for all that follows. Communion itself—which is "part with Him,"—fruitfulness, testimony, must all depend upon this.

> When therefore he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments and had sat down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye

Jesus rises therefore from supper, not when it was ended, as the common version represents, but while it was going on, leaving the place of communion, as if this were interrupted, until His necessary work for them should renew it once more. He rises therefore from supper, and girds Himself for a fresh service. His sacrificial work is over; the shedding of blood is no more needed, but only the washing of water; and here also not the "bath of regeneration, "(Tit. iii. 5), but simply, as He presently points out to Peter, the washing of the feet. It is defilement contracted in the walk that is in question; and He puts Himself at their feet to wash them. As of old Jehovah could say to Israel, "Thou hast made Me to serve with thy sins, "(Isa. xliii. 24,) so may He still say to us; but His unchangeable love is equal to all possible demands upon it. Notice here that all His disciples need it, and that thus He invites us all to-day to put our feet into His hands continually, that they may be cleansed according to His thought of what is cleanness, who alone is capable of judging according to the perfect standard of the sanctuary, of which He is indeed Himself the Light.

And again notice what is involved in this: for it makes clear that the Lord's significant action here does not simply point out to us the remedy for that defilement of which we may be conscious, while of course it does apply in the fullest way to this. The principle goes much further; for there is, as we all must be aware, a sad possibility of *un*conscious defilement and thus of slipping unawares out of communion with God; while conscience gives no sign of what is wrong, and may thus mislead us as to our condition. It cannot be too fully impressed upon our minds that conscience is not the standard of right and wrong, but the word of God alone is that. The testimony of the Word itself is, that "If a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord, *though he wist it not*, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity" (Lev. v. 17). For who can truthfully say that he was necessarily ignorant of what the word of God declares?

But even where the thing is clear, conscience may be dull and indifferent. The common sights and sounds with which the world is full tend insensibly to dull us; the dust with which the air is full settles upon the mirror, we know not how, and it gives no more the clear witness that it did so short a time since: we need therefore continual recourse to Him whom the Psalmist invoked: "Search me O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me" (Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24). Ah! what incompetent judges are we in our own case! and how thankful may we be to have such an One as is here before us to judge our case for us! It is involved in this, that we come into His hands, not for mere settlement of this matter or that; we do not say to Him, "Search out this or that," but, "Search *me;*" and thus, if we are perfectly honest in it, we are inviting the light to be poured into all the dark corners and crannies of our lives and hearts: we are with Him without reserve,—for self-judgment indeed, but as He manifests us to ourselves and thus enables us.

If there has been conscious failure, the mere confession of it is not the whole matter, perhaps not the half of it. Many from a misapplication of the apostle's words,* "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," (1 John i. 9,) would make this a light and easy method of settling old scores which leaves them ever more lightly to be run up again. Others with a more serious but a legal spirit, are left groaning over their inability to determine how far they have fulfilled a condition which they cannot treat so lightly. Neither of these realize that the real remedy given by the apostle, "If any one sin," is the blessed Advocate with the Father, who here, as the necessary result of His being this, Himself assumes the responsibility of cleansing us after His own manner,

* Which really refer to Salvation.

that communion may be restored. *Confession is not washing*, and His words are, "If *I* wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." Washing is more than forgiveness. There is the searching out by the Word of the matter as in the Presence of God; where the steps which led into the evil come into review, as well as the end they led to, and the foundation of all is judged: so that the hold of the sin is broken for the sinner. We have a conspicuous example of the Lord's dealing with a soul for restoration in the history, soon to be given us, of Simon Peter. Not without significance is it, that the very one who resists the Lord's proffered service to him (however his motive may plead in his excuse) is the one who becomes in his failure the example of cleansing such as is before us in figure here.

How the need we have of Him is emphazised all through Scripture! and how good and wholesome to be thus made to keep close to Him for all the length of our journey! Is it a hardship to be thus in continual company with Him? Look at Him here, and answer! He is at our very feet to wash them! And what His action here secures is that we should have part with Him. Is not all the misery of our lives but the result of losing sight of Him? When Israel entered their promised land, Jehovah went with them. There was given them continual access to Him, for guidance in every emergency that could arise. They seem to have interpreted this in such a way that they would not burden the Lord with too many of their matters. It was plain enough to them that Ai was so small a city that but a small number of them would be competent to take it. They tried that, and at little Ai found their first defeat. Israel had sinned; but it was hidden from them. How then were they responsible for that? Ah! they had followed their own thoughts, and had taken no counsel of the Lord. They did the same in the matter of the Gibeonites, and again the enemy succeeded against them. Now "these things were our types;" only the battle is for us a spiritual one: not therefore less arduous. How we need His cleansing grace, that we may be such as He can show Himself for in the day of conflict; that we may obtain possession of that land which is (in the fullest sense) our "part with Him!"

If it be restoration that is needed, how comforting the knowledge of the truth that nothing can shut us out of His Presence, if indeed our heartfelt desire is to be there; that we are welcome, just as we are, not needing any whole or partial cleansing to entitle us to come in at a door which is never closed against us. For indeed, if we did need this, we could never find it: His word is,—not, if thou art not washed,—but, "If *I* wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me."

Thus of necessity the first step to be taken is to come back to Him, from whom to have got away is the first and saddest failure. If we come back, it is, of course, to put ourselves into His hands, that He may discover to us our need, and meet it with His grace. None but Himself can meet it. In the glory of His Presence the heart is softened, while the conscience is aroused. While He does not upbraid, truth in the inward parts is re-established, and power is found in the very consciousness of weakness, and confidence in the wreck of all self-trust. We have all this brought out in the story of Peter, which for its importance the Spirit of God has given us at length; we shall not, for this reason, dwell more upon it in this place.

Peter, when he learns that it is to have part with Christ that his feet are to be washed, goes immediately, after his ardent manner, to the opposite extreme. "Lord," he says, "not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." The Lord answers him, "He that is *bathed* needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." The "washing of regeneration," the cleansing which is effected in new birth, never needs to be repeated. Spite of all that tends to destroy it in this world, the effect is an indelible one. "Whosoever is born of God," says the same apostle who records this in his first epistle, "doth not commit"—or rather, "practise"—"sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin"—be sinning—"because he is born of God." In how many ways we are reminded of the unfailing character of God's precious grace! The love

[f] call me Teacher and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, ye ought also to [g] wash one another's feet. For I have given you an [h] example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The bond-servant is no [i] greater than his lord; nor he that is sent* greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, [j] happy are ye if ye do them.

* Literally, "the apostle."

[f] Matt. 23.8, 10. *cf.* Eph.6.9.
[g] *cf.* Gal.6.1. *cf.* 1 Pet.5.5. *cf.* 2 Thess. 3. 14, 15.
[h] *cf.* 1 Pet.2. 21. *cf.* Eph.5.2. *cf.* Matt.11. 29.
[i] Matt. 10. 24, 25. ch. 15. 20. *cf.* ch. 21. 18, 19.
[j] Lk. 11. 28; *cf.* Matt. 7. 21; *cf.* Jas. 1. 22–27.

that has laid hold upon us for eternal glory is not going to be defeated in what it has taken in hand to do. The washing of the feet can be repeated indefinitely, but not the bathing of the whole person. The bathed person may defile his feet by walking, but nothing more. Only the feet need cleansing to be wholly clean.

The Lord now exhorts His disciples to imitate His example. They called Him Teacher: let this lowly grace of His then be their instruction. They called Him Lord: let them obey His command. He, their Teacher and Lord, had washed their feet: they might well wash one another's feet. Plainly it was no mere ceremony that he was proposing for their imitation, but the meeting of a deep spiritual need, as love alone could meet it. In a scene of defilement such as the world is, alluring even the hearts of disciples from their Lord, be it theirs to recover and cleanse those who were being drawn away by its allurements. Mere judgment of the evil would not do this, however righteous. Love alone has power to draw, and Christ must be the One drawn to or there is no restoration. How strangely do those who confess themselves debtors wholly to a Saviour's grace yet deal with one another on the totally opposite principle of law. He that would cleanse another's feet must be at his feet to cleanse them. The soul that has fallen into sin has done so because it has got away from the Source of holiness and strength. It is of small service to judge for such their sin; that is only the sign of how far they have departed. They need with this the confirmation to them of that grace which alone breaks the dominion of sin (Rom. vi. 14). People seem as if they argued as to failing Christians, that grace has failed with them, and now *government*, as they would say, must have its course. Now government is the government of grace. "*Grace* reigns through righteousness;" the government is a *Father's* government; while He truly "judges according to every man's work." God's electing love has pledged even, as to Abraham, (Gen. xv. 17,) the "smoking furnace" to do His work. He may thus permit Issachar, become the world's drudge for hire (Gen. xlix. 15), to gall his shoulder with the yoke of a hard service. A child of God may thus be allowed to eat of the fruit of his own ways, that he may learn, in the only way that he himself has rendered possible, the perfection of the ways of God. It is a painful method but a self-chosen one; and plainly through all grace is working,—*governing*. We can never oppose, for the child of God, His government to His grace. All through, His path is light; and it could not be grace that did not conform to this.

Manifestly, therefore, this does not shut out from His Presence the soul that seeks Him; whatever may be the distance to which it has wandered from Him. It may unbelievingly think itself shut out; it may take the eating of the fruit of its own ways, to which it may still be compelled, as the evident proof of this, which it is not: David's sin followed him all the rest of his life; but that in no wise set aside the fact of his full forgiveness.

It should be evident that we can never merit or work our way into that glorious Presence by getting cleansed from whatever evil we may by our wandering from it have fallen into. The grace which alone could open the door still keeps the door open, and only there, at the hands of Christ Himself, can cleansing be

SECTION 2. (Chap. xiii. 18–38.)
The enemy's work but adding glory to the humbled Son of man.

1 Forewarning of One, prescient and supreme, who identifies His sent ones with Him self.

1. I SPEAK [k] not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that [l] eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye may [m] believe that I am he. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that [n] receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

[k] ver. 10. *cf.* ch. 17. 12.
[l] Ps. 41. 9. *cf.* Ob. 7. ver. 26.
[m] *cf.* ch. 14. 29. *cf.* ch. 16. 4.
[n] Matt. 10. 40. *cf.* Matt. 25. 40. *cf.* 2 Cor. 2. 14–16.

obtained. As long as we are away, we shall still only "stumble and stray," and therefore to be kept out would be to make all recovery impossible. But the weakening of faith by the evil course that has been pursued may indeed be a terrible hindrance; and here is a main point to be remembered by those who desire to have the happiness of which the Lord speaks, of doing to others that which He is doing so constantly for us, as far as it is possible for us to follow Him in it. We must remember that grace alone is the victorious breaker of sin's bonds, and is thus the holiest thing possible: there needs no modification of it at any time,—no guarding it by the mixture with it of something else. That which is not holiness is not grace, and it is not to skin over an ulcer slightly to maintain God's perfect grace for all that seek Him at any moment of time.

Just on this very account,—because grace is sovereign,—there must be, of course, the soul's full surrender to it; and this we must insist on. Christ cleanses after His manner: it must be full cleansing or not at all. As already said, we come near to put our feet in His hands: there is no other access at all, but for this purpose,—no possibility of having part with Him save as we submit ourselves to this. Christ must be "Teacher and Lord" absolutely, as He assures every one of His own. The terms of discipleship He has fully insisted on, and they never vary. Grace sovereign means Christ sovereign, and there is no other way. But with Him there is always, not simply light given, but strength ministered,—strength which is made perfect in our human weakness,—and a joy which *is* strength,—it is the atmosphere proper to it: "in Thy Presence fulness of joy."

Happy then are we if, knowing these things, we are found doing them. Abundance of need there is among the people of God for the ministry of such grace to the wandering and needy. It is the ministry of Christ Himself: there is no help, no restoration possible save as we can get them to Christ; and He, whatever the case may be, is all-sufficient. But we must pass on.

Sec. 2.

The shadow of what He has just said deepens upon His soul. Of those with Him now, in the intimacy to which His love has admitted them, there is yet one to whom that love itself can add but deeper perdition. The enemy is there and at work, where divine love has brought Him, upon a path descending now to the utter darkness only to be relieved by the consciousness that it is indeed love's errand that He is upon, and of the recompense that awaits it,—a "joy set before Him" for which "He endured the Cross, despising the shame."

As Seed of the woman, the conflict with Satan was part of His necessary work. By man whom he had overcome the adversary was to be overcome, and God vindicated in His latest creation-work. But the conditions of the conflict were far otherwise than at the beginning. Man, conquered in his strength, was to conquer in his weakness, cleaving, in the character which belongs to the creature and is his safeguard to maintain, to the might of God. Thus with the "heel" of His perfect Humanity He trod down the adversary; that heel bruised even to death in doing this. It was now the hour in which His assailant in the wilderness, then baffled and withdrawing for a season, would return as prince

2 (21-30): After the sop, Satan!

2. When Jesus had said these things, he was [o]troubled, and testified and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall deliver me up. The disciples therefore looked at one another, [p]doubting of whom he spake. Now there was, lying on the bosom of Jesus, one of his disciples whom Jesus [q]loved. Simon Peter therefore maketh a sign to him, that he should ask who it was of whom he spake. He then, leaning on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answereth, He it is to * whom I shall give the sop, when I

o *cf.* ch. 12. 27. *cf.* Matt. 26. 37, 38.

p Matt. 26. 21-25. Mk. 14. 18-21. Lk. 22. 21-23.

q ch. 19. 26. ch. 20. 2. ch. 21. 7. *cf.* Gal. 2. 20.

* Or, "for whom I shall dip the sop and give it to him."

of this world with the power of the world behind him: and already had he found one of the chosen twelve, for the paltriest of bribes, willing to betray his Master. From the buffeting of the storm so arising the rest must scatter from Him or be overthrown: to His very face another would deny Him; He must be stripped of what comfort the faithfulness of His few intimates could secure Him; one partial but sweet exception being shown us in this Gospel and in no other. But all is allowed for His fullest triumph. He is to be uniquely perfect, in a unique place, God Himself leaving Him, until the time in which, the demands of righteousness being fully met, He will be able to appear in His behalf.

1. With the sense then of what is before Him, He foretells the defection of Judas. This yet only accomplishes the Scripture. It was written: "He that eateth bread with Me hath lifted up his heel against Me." *His* heel! the most contemptuous rejection possible: was it not such to sell the Lord of glory for the price of a slave? It was as if he would inflict upon Christ the serpent's predicted doom! But it was all foreseen and announced, and He afresh announces it, that faith might be strengthened in the rest by that which would naturally most severely try them. By His choice of them alone they were secured; and He who had prayed for Peter, that his faith might not fail, was even now watching over the weak faith of the rest.

Then He raises them up to fullest identification with Himself: "Verily, verily, I say unto you. He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth Me: and he that receiveth Me receiveth Him that sent Me." This is yet in the ears of Judas; which are dulling, however, into the hardened insensibility which only sin can produce. We are next called, for our instruction, to contemplate this tremendous spectacle,—to tread, as it were, the very antechamber of hell itself.

2. The Lord's soul is troubled: He is not roused to anger, as we might well expect to find. He is the One who has said and sworn, "As I live, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth;" and the tears wept over Jerusalem seem ready to flow over once more. In all that passes between the Lord and Judas in these last scenes, another and more powerful feeling keeps back the anger which the baseness of his awful traffic in the blood of his Master would naturally arouse:—the appalling sight of one over whom were gathering, as it were, beforehand the lurid shadows of the pit. What must it have been for Him to have to say, "One of *you* shall deliver Me up"? The other disciples seem scarcely to have imagined the possibility of real treachery on the part of one of their own number; for after Judas is distinctly pointed out, and the Lord dismisses him with the significant words, "What thou doest, do quickly," not one of them thinks for what purpose he is gone out. They think perhaps of some unintentional disclosure, or at most of some break-down in weakness under too great a pressure; but a deliberate betrayal how can they imagine on the part of one who has been in *His* company? We recall naturally the words of the apostle afterwards,—the very one to whom the secret was communicated here,—as if they might account for the strange inability to comprehend what

have dipped it. And when he had [r] dipped the sop, he taketh and giveth it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And [s] after the sop, then Satan entered into him. Jesus therefore saith unto him, What thou doest do [s] quickly. But none of those at table knew why he said this unto him: but they supposed, since Judas had the [t] bag, that Jesus said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of for the feast, or that he should give something to the poor. He therefore, having received the sop, [v] went immediately out; and it was [w] night.

r *cf.* Ru. 2. 14. *cf.* Gen. 43. 34.
s ver. 2. *cf.* Ps. 109. 4. *cf.* Heb. 10. 29.
t *cf.* Lk. 12. 50. *cf.* Matt. 23. 32.
u ch. 12. 6. *cf.* Lk. 8. 1-3.
v *cf.* Gen. 4. 16.
w *cf.* Lk. 22. 53; *cf.* Matt. 8. 12; *cf.* Jude 13.

had been declared so plainly,—"He that sinneth hath not seen Him neither known Him." True it is, Judas *had* never known the glory in the face of Jesus. What he had known we will not speculate upon; it needs not. So near, yet so far off; capable of casting out demons in Christ's name, yet one to whom, on His side, Christ must say, I never knew you,—this is the plain and awful conjunction, challenging all hearts.

"After the sop, Satan:" there is another terrible conjunction. The token of love becomes in its rejection that which hands over the unhappy man to the adversary of Christ. That morsel from the dish was, we may be sure, no mere sign for another, no semblance of a friendship that no more existed. On the side of Him who gave it, it was true, where all was true,—the token of love that even yet would fain be received as that, and that could warm even a lifeless soul to life. If, still rejected, it should be death instead of life, this is but the necessary transformation which sin indulged produces in the most precious gifts of God. Love with its own wonder-working brings out of death life; in the nature of things, the opposite will produce the opposite. It is the one law, by which like produces like.

And we have, in beautiful contrast here, the sweet assurance of how love welcomes where it is welcomed. The unnamed beloved disciple brought into the same view with Judas,—though we may elsewhere have his name revealed,—seems here to have given us a blank cheque, to which any other that desires may have leave—if he fulfil the conditions—to put in his name. Most certainly, here we find one whose love presses for recognition, and will never fail to answer to faith's utmost claim upon Him. "Drink," He says, "Yea, drink abundantly, O beloved!" How John has drunk in, his first epistle will bear witness for him. He is the apostle of love;—love that he has learned where one and all must learn it. "Hereby know we love, because He laid down His life for us." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." "Herein is love perfected with us, that we should have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is so are we in this world." Thus John draws his arguments from where we all may draw them; but he has so abundantly drunk in, that the whole furniture of his epistle seems but the product of the assimilation of the words of Christ. Especially is this true of these last words before His being delivered up. But John's style, the aspect in which he sees things, is just what we find in the Gospel. All through you see his receptive character,—the man who leaned on the breast of Jesus; and thus he is the apostle of the divine nature and the life eternal; life, light, righteousness, love,—these are the themes of which he is never weary of speaking. And this is what so attracts the heart in John,—it is the heart of Christ that attracts us. Ah, it is this heart that seeks still vessels into which it may pour its fulness. And what we can appropriate we are still welcome to. Which is only to say, we are still welcome to lie on His bosom, as the beloved disciple did, and learn where he learned.

3 (31-35): The Son of man glorified, and God in Him.

3. When therefore he was gone out, Jesus saith, Now is the Son of man [z]glorified, and God is [y]glorified in him. [If God be glorified in him],* he will also glorify him in [z]himself; and will [a]straightway glorify him. Little children, yet a [b]little while am I with you. Ye shall seek me; and, [c]as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go ye cannot come, so now I say to you. A [d]new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another; [e]as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all [f]know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."†

4 (36-38): Man unable to follow Him now.

4. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go thou [g]canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. Peter saith unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will [h]lay down my life for thee. Jesus answereth, Wilt thou lay down thy life for me? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The [i]cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice.

x *cf.* ch. 7. 39. *cf.* ch. 17. 1.
y *cf.* ch. 12. 28. *cf.* ch. 14. 13.
z *cf.* Heb. 2. 9. *cf.* ch. 17. 5.
a *cf.* Acts 2. 24. *cf.* ch. 12. 23. *cf.* Phil. 2. 9-11.
b *cf.* ch. 16. 16-22.
c ch. 7. 33. ch. 8. 21.
d *cf.* Rom. 13. 8. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 7, 8.
e ch. 15. 12, 17. *cf.* 1 Jno. 3. 11, 23.
f *cf.* 1 Jno. 3. 14. *cf.* ch. 17. 21.
g ver. 33.
h Matt. 26. 33-35. Mk. 14. 29-31. Lk. 22. 31-34; *ctr.* Phil. 3. 3.
i ch. 18. 17, 18, 25-27.

* Many omit this clause. † Literally, "among yourselves."

3. Out the traitor goes into the night,—a terrible night! but the heart of Jesus is relieved by his absence. He proceeds to enlarge upon the results of His Cross. The Son of man is to be glorified in it: is it not His glory to-day? God too, in every attribute, is glorified in Him. Where do we see God's righteousness as in the Cross? Where has His love been manifest as there? A sinner taken to heaven by its means is made the righteousness of God in Him! the riches of the glory of His grace are told out to eternal ages. Sin, which might seem to have brought everything into question, has been by its means made the occasion of His brightest, fullest, most marvellous revelation!

If God then has been so glorified in Him, He will respond by glorifying in turn Him who has done this. He is taken up to the right hand of God and sits upon the Father's throne. This is possible to Himself alone, and is so given, but the results for man are unspeakably great: a Man is in the nearest place to God that can be: God and man one in His Person! He does not follow this out here: in its fulness it waits for the interpreting Spirit.

But this involved for the disciples His going away. As He had said to the Jews so now He says to them, He is going where they cannot come. They are not now to be with Him, going out and coming in, as through the blessed time just at an end; let them cling all the more to one another as His representatives,—representatives thus of His love to each and all. The duty of love would thus be as a new commandment with the new light of His life laid down for them shining upon it. So would men also recognize them as His disciples,—as having practically learned a lesson so divinely set.

4. Peter full of love which the Lord's words have inflamed, but with no just estimate of himself, bursts out with the question, why cannot he follow Him now? If it were death that was before Him, he would follow Him through that,—was ready to lay down his life for Him. How little we think often in our well-meant zeal, of how much self-confidence may inhere in it and what it needs to follow the footsteps of Him who yet has left us an example to be followed! Peter was to be gratified in his desire when Christ should have prepared the way; and when he himself had learned by all the bitterness of failure his own incompetency. But how severe a teacher experience is! and how much might we escape of such necessity, if only we would learn from Scripture,—

SECTION 3. (Chap. xiv.)

Part with Him: the Father's House, and the Manifestation of the Father, in the Son and by the Spirit.

1 (1-7): Abodes in the Father's House.

1. LET not your heart be [j]troubled: ye believe on God; believe also on me. In my Father's House are many [k]abodes; if it were [l]not so, I would have told you: for I [m]go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I [n]come again, and will receive you unto myself: that [o]where I am there ye may be also. And whither I go ye [p]know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?

cf. Phil. 3 20, 21. *o cf.* 1 Thess. 4. 13-18; *cf.* ch. 17. 24; *cf.* ch. 12. 26; *ctr.* ch. 7. 34. 36; *cf.* ch. 11. 25.

j ver. 27. *cf.* 2 Thess. 2. 16, 17.
k cf. 1 Ki. 6. 5, 6. *cf.* Ezek. 41. 6. *cf.* Rev. 3. 12.
l cf. ch. 8. 40. *cf.* 2 Pet. 1. 16.
m cf. Heb. 9. 24 with Heb. 10. 19.
n cf. Acts 1. 11. *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 23.
p cf. ch. 13.

"profitable for correction and instruction in righteousness!" How good is God, to supply us with such a teacher! How we fill our path with sorrow by not submitting to it!

Sec. 3.

We have now the "part with Him" of which He has already spoken. First its full consummation in the Father's House, the many abodes in glory, in which we shall dwell with Him. Then we have the present manifestation of the Father to us in Christ Himself, and by the gift of the Holy Spirit: so perfectly are we provided for on our way to that eternal Home. Father, Son, and Spirit are all employed in our behalf, on a path which shines with heavenly light upon it to the perfect day.

1. The Lord exhorts and encourages them in view of His departure from them. He is to be their sufficient resource whatever might be their trouble, as the sure though unseen object for faith, as God was. The Father's House was before them as before Him, the only full satisfaction for the heart, where rest will be eternal. That was the place to which He was going, and there of necessity His own would be with Him. Would He otherwise have encouraged an intimacy which was to end for ever? would He not have warned them? Ah, He was going up there to love and care for them with the same steadfast care as when on earth, and would prepare a place for them.

Until He finally left it, as rejected by Israel, the temple was for Christ His Father's House. Now He speaks of another,—that of which Israel's was but the figure: but therefore naturally using this to illustrate the higher meaning. The "holy places made with hands," says the apostle (Heb. ix. 23, 24) are "figures of the true," "the patterns of things in the heaveus." The court of that house with its numerous chambers, in which the priests as they came up for service in their various courses found temporary lodgment, were indeed more a contrast than anything else with the glorious abodes which the Lord speaks of here. These are *homes*, not mere lodging-places; and in nearer relation to the Divine Father than such outside courts could indicate. The reality transcends all shadows. They who are here provided for are the happy children of One who transcends infinitely all other fathers. And this at once delivers us from the thought which has been attached to the simple language of the blessed Teacher,—as if "many" signified diversity of rank. The whole connection and the terms used are against such an interpretation. In the Father's House all are children; and all the children are in the nearness of such relationship. It is the fruit of Christ's work, and not the reward of our own. It ought to be plain at once to every one who knows anything of the place into which divine grace has brought him, that these things cannot be mingled. The apostle's words clearly state the incompatibility of these two principles: "If by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace, otherwise work is no more work" (Rom. xi. 6).

Jesus saith unto him, I am the [q]way, and the [r]truth, and the [s]life: [t]no one cometh unto the Father but by me. [u]If ye had known* me, ye would have known* my Father also; and from [v]henceforth ye know* him, and have seen him.

*Two Greek words—the first and last γινώσκω, the second οἶδα.

[q] *cf.* ch. 10. 9. *cf.* Heb. 10. 20. [r] *cf.* ch. 1. 14, 17. *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 20. *cf.* Eph. 4. 21. [s] *cf.* ch. 1. 4. *cf.* ch. 5. 26. [t] *cf.* Acts 4. 12; *cf.* Heb. 7. 25; *cf.* Eph. 2. 18. [u] ch. 8. 19. [v] *cf.* ch. 16. 25; *cf.* ch. 20. 17; *cf.* Rom. 8. 15.

The principles are incompatible, and in all that the work of Christ has accomplished for us, this needs and owns no help from man. Yet it is quite true that there are rewards, and that divine love will satisfy itself in thus owning all that has been done for love. Mercy will show itself also in this; but how? By cleansing away all that which has been mixed with it, and would make this impossible; and this is what is represented to us in the *blood-washed* robes of the book of Revelation. The righteousness which we have in Christ,—the best robe in the Father's House,—can never need such washing; but the robes that are spoken of in this way are the "righteousnesses," or, as the Revised Version has it, "the righteous *deeds*" of the saints: for the book of Revelation is the book of the Throne,—of government and recompense, and we must not be surprised if we have a very different view of things from that presented in Romans or Galatians.

But the whole context assures us that differences of reward are not in question. The Lord is not telling His disciples that "one star differeth from another star in glory,"—it is not indeed glory at all, of which He is speaking; He is comforting their hearts in the thought of His absence, that after all it is only a temporary one, and that the Father's House to which He is going has room enough for all, and is to receive them all eternally. The issues of responsibility do not come in here, as should be plain, and would only introduce an element of uncertainty where faith needed to have the clearest vision.

He had come amongst men, not merely to do a certain work among them, however great, and to be gone. He was going back; but as a Man, taking back with Him the nature He had assumed to the glory He had left,—the pledge of abiding fellowship with those for whom He now went up to take a place as their Representative before God. The communion to which He had admitted them on earth was there to be continued and perpetuated: if it were not so, He would have told them; He would not have bound their hearts to Himself by that dear, familiar intercourse to which He had encouraged them, if it were to have an end for ever. Not so; if He were going away, it was to prepare a place for them; and He would return again Himself to receive them to Himself,—to welcome them to His own eternal Home. His must be their first, best greeting.

He does not explain how the place in His Father's House should be prepared for them; nor were they yet, perhaps, able to understand. The epistle to the Hebrews will show us, if we turn to it, that the heavenly places had to be purified by the better sacrifice which He was to offer, in which all the sacrifices of the law would find their fulfilment. Ephesians speaks similarly of the "redemption of the purchased possession;" and Colossians of the reconciliation of things in heaven (Heb. ix. 23; Eph. i. 14; Col. i. 20). Such thoughts are, even now, strange to many a Christian; for we are slow to realize the extent of the injury that sin has inflicted, and equally, therefore, the breadth of the application of the work of Christ. This is not the place to enlarge upon it; but it is not difficult to understand that wherever sin has raised question of God,—and it has done so, as we know, in heaven itself,—the work of Christ, as bringing out in full His whole character in love and righteousness regarding that which had raised the question, has enabled Him now to come in and restore, consistently with all that He is, what had been defiled with evil. Thus our High Priest, to use as the apostle does the figures of Israel's day of atonement, has entered into the sanctuary to reconcile with the virtue of His sacrifice the holy

2 (8-14): Christ's witness to the Father.

2. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have [w]I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The [x]words that I speak unto you I speak not from myself; but the Father who abideth in me, he doeth the* works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very [y]works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that

w *cf.* Matt. 11. 27. ch. 12. 45. *cf.* ch. 1.18.

x *cf.* ch.7.16. *cf.* ch. 8.28.

y ch. 5. 36. ch. 10. 38. *cf.* Acts 2. 22.

* Many read, "his."

places themselves, and make them accessible to us. Man in Christ has risen to the highest pinnacle of glory with the whole acclaim of heaven; and men redeemed by His blood can be associated with their Lord in glory, "made the (manifested) righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21).

They knew therefore whither He was going; they knew also the way. For they knew in fact more than they realized that they knew. When Thomas, thinking, as it would appear, of a kind of map of the road, which they had not, ventures to object their ignorance of this, the Lord shows him his mistake by assuring him that He Himself was the Way: through Him alone could any come to God. Nor only so; He was also the Truth,—the revelation of God. And since, even so, man was dead and unreceptive of the truth, He was the Life also, which men needed for this reception. The full treasury for man's need was here then to be found.

2. Philip's desire to be shown the Father brings out more fully the witness of the Son to Him. Where Philip was, many are still to-day. They know Christ as, in a sense, the way to God; but as yet they have not seen the Father in Him: Christ is rather to them a Saviour *from* God, than the manifestation of God. He is the Doer of the work which the Father, although they call Him this, simply receives. They are shielded from His wrath, but Himself they do not know. They are, in short, where the Israelite was the night of their first passover. Sheltered under the blood of the lamb, yet the wail of judgment was in their ears, and God for them was identified with what in reality is only His *strange* work,—unknown therefore in what is His true character.

The Lord's reply to Philip is an expression of pain at his want of apprehension. "Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known *Me*, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not from Myself, but the Father who abideth in Me, *He* doeth the works." His very presence here was to declare the Father, and that after all the Father should not be understood by disciples of His, wounds Him in the deepest way. "Believe Me," He says, "that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me,"—that is, that we are thoroughly identified,—"or else believe Me for the very works' sake." It is a tender but sad rebuke. Had Philip indeed not known that He was on the Father's mission? that He was Himself the Love-gift of God? But *we* are even less excusable, if now we know not. What, is the Father righteousness merely, and only the Son love? are there two Gods, or One Only God? If we have indeed come to Christ, we have not to go a further journey to reach the Father, but have got the very depth of the Father's heart told out. This is, as we have seen from the beginning, the constant theme in John. And oh, what a marvelous joy in simplicity of faith to take it in! Philip was right at least in saying, "It sufficeth us"; and nothing short of this can possibly suffice us.

And the Lord adds to this, that because He was going to the Father, in

believeth on me, the [z] works that I do shall he do also; and [a] greater works than these shall he do, because I go to the Father. And [b] whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, this will I do, that the Father may be [c] glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask* anything in my name, [d] I will do it.

3 (15-27): The indwelling of the Spirit.

3. If ye [e] love me, keep my commandments. And I will request† the Father, and he will give you another

* Many insert, "Me."

† A familiar word, always used of our Lord's asking the Father.

[z] *cf.* Matt. 21. 21. *cf.* Acts 4. 9, 10.

[a] *cf.* Acts 2. 37-47. *cf.* Acts 16. 25-34.

[b] *cf.* ch. 15. 7, 16.

[c] ch. 13. 31. *cf.* ch. 15. 9.

[d] *cf.* ch. 16. 23, 24. *cf.* 2 Cor. 12. 8, 9.

[e] vers. 21, 23; ch. 15. 10; *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15.

testimony of the Father's delight in that glorious work achieved, even these poor disciples of His should do greater works than He Himself had done. The thousands converted at Pentecost, compared with the "labor for nought" of which He complains through Isaiah as characterizing His own life-toil, already illustrate this; while beyond lay that Gentile harvest which, even while Israel was reaping the fruit of her rejection of Him, would anticipate the final world-harvest. These things are, no doubt, the "*greater* works," while the miracles that He did His disciples also did, even to the raising of the dead, the healing by the shadow of Peter, or the communication of curative power to handkerchiefs or aprons by the body of Paul. This was still the Son's own work, all things being put into His hand as the Fulfiller of the Father's purpose, and received by Him to glorify the Father in the accomplishment of His blessed will. Whatever therefore they should for this end in His Name ask of the Father, He, the Son, would do it; that in the Son the Father might be glorified. And He repeats again, to emphasize it, "If ye shall ask anything in My Name, I will do it."

This is indeed a large enough assurance. It is guarded and made right by the controlling purpose. He who is possessed by the desire that God may be glorified has in this assurance a wondrous possibility before him of successful prayer. Such a desire, just as it is whole-hearted, will clear the sight, and enable for such prayer as can be answered,—will lift up the heart with confidence to God.

We are taught by all this what praying in Christ's Name is:—that it is not a mere putting His Name at the end of one's prayer. It means that we are identifying ourselves in faith with Him who seeks ever the fulfilment of the divine purposes. How impossible to ask truly in Christ's Name that we may obtain the satisfaction of mere selfish cravings! And yet what confidence does it give, that in proportion as our desire is to fill aright the place which He has given us as His representatives upon earth, we may have all that we can possibly need to accomplish this. Here there need be no stinted expectation: here is a sphere in which coveting is fully in place. Alas, how we practise humility after the fashion of Ahaz, who, where God had bidden him make request according to His own greatness, assumes the garb of a piety which he does not possess, and says, "I will not ask, neither will I *tempt the Lord.*" And how often do we remain content with a mere scanty pittance of spiritual good, when God has blessed us with "*all* spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus,"—when He is glorified in our practical possession of them,—and when He has said to us, "Covet earnestly the best gifts," and, "Open thy mouth *wide*, and I will fill it."

3. The Lord now proceeds to speak of the provision made for them, that they might not be left as orphans in the world in the time of His absence from them, but have Him manifested to them, and realize His presence with them in a better and higher way than even when He was with them upon earth. We have already been told of that gift of the Spirit which they that believed on Him were to receive in a new way after Jesus should be glorified (chap. vii. 35). But now the Lord teaches them distinctly that the Spirit is personally to come

[f] Advocate, that he may be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth, whom the world [g] cannot receive, because it beholdeth him not, nor knoweth him: ye know him; for he abideth with you, and [h] shall be in you. I will not leave you [i] orphans, I will [j] come unto you. Yet a

[f] ch. 15. 26. ch. 16. 13. cf. 1 Jno. 2. 1.
[g] cf. 1 Cor. 2. 14.
[h] cf. ch. 7. 37–39. cf. 1 Cor. 6. 19; cf. 2 Cor. 6. 16; cf. 1 Jno. 3. 24.
[i] cf. Rom. 8. 15, 16; cf. Gal. 4. 6.
[j] cf. ver. 23; cf. Eph. 3. 17; cf. Col. 1. 27.

and take the place that He had filled among them. As the Spirit of truth He would lead them into all truth, giving them the full consciousness of their identification with Him and His with them. *He* would not leave them, but abide with them for ever. This is indeed the great characteristic of the time in which we live, that while Christ is above on high, our Advocate with the Father, we have "another Advocate" down here,—another glorious Person to take up our cause on earth, and be *in* us such power as Christ is *for* us at the right hand of God. Thus indeed is our weakness and emptiness ministered to by divine and perfect fulness and strength. How wondrous is this provision made for us! and what a testimony to the value of the work which has been accomplished for us! This divine Person comes to make *us*,—our very bodies,—His dwelling-place,—His temple. Yet we are fully conscious that evil also dwells in us: and thus there arises the very serious question, How can the Spirit of God dwell in such an abode? And this is the argument in some forms of perfectionism,—Christ and Belial, it is urged, cannot dwell in the same temple. Certainly the temple cannot be Belial's and yet Christ's; but how God could dwell in the midst of a sinful people was the lesson of the day of atonement in the old dispensation: "And (the priest) shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness" (Lev. xvi. 16).

For us the blessed work is accomplished of which Israel's sacrifices were but the mere figure, and it is in Christ that the believer is seen and accepted. The Spirit indwelling is the witness of the perfection of that offering which has "perfected for ever"—or, "in perpetuity"—"them that are sanctified" (Heb. x. 14). The right word here is "in perpetuity,"—which assures us that at no time—not for a moment—is the believer other than perfect before the eye of God. and that upon ground entirely irrespective of his personal behavior. With the *Father*—as such—it is very different: "the Father, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man's work" (1 Pet. i. 17). But as between God and His creature all is once for all settled, and to take account of sin there would be to dishonor the covering blood. Thus "if any one sin," says the apostle, writing to Christians, "we have an Advocate with the Father.—Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John ii. 1). The relationship in which we stand to God is not, and cannot be changed by that which yet becomes more evil in view of it. The Father's character is outraged by the ill-conduct of those who are of His family, and the Father's heart is wounded in the same proportion. His provision of atonement for it cannot make it less serious in His sight: the Cross has only revealed it in its abyss of horror.

The Lord's title in this passage is the same as that which in the Gospel He gives to the Spirit. In the common version it is translated "Comforter," and is quite capable of such a meaning; but when He says, "*another* Comforter" he is comparing the Spirit with Himself. The word in these two applications must therefore be rendered uniformly, and "Advocate" is perhaps its best, as it is its most usual rendering. Literally it means "one called to one's side,"—a helper, assistant; thence, an advocate, a legal assistant, in whose hands you leave your case. The Lord is He to whom God has committed His people,—on earth the true and faithful Shepherd of the sheep, who laid down His life for them. Now going on high, He still maintains in glory the same care over His flock; and thus their stumblings and wanderings engage Him still in their be-

little while, and the [k]world beholdeth me no more; but ye behold me: [l]because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall [m]know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my [n]commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my [o]Father, and I will love him, and will [p]manifest myself unto him.

k ch.7.33,34. ver. 17.
l *cf.* Rom.5. 10. *cf.* 2 Cor. 4. 10, 11. *cf.* Heb. 7. 25.
m ver. 10. *cf.* ch.16.25.
n ver. 15.
o *cf.* ch. 12. 26; *cf.* ch. 16. 26, 27. p *cf.* ch. 7.4; *cf.* Heb. 2. 9; *cf.* 2 Cor. 3. 18.

half. He is their Advocate with the Father,—not because the Father Himself can fail in either love or power, but as the One who has had committed to Him the burden of them all. To Him they were left in the conflict of the Cross: His hand is to bring them through to glory.

Yet on earth, He having gone from it, they are to have another Advocate, the Holy Spirit; from the beginning the Worker in God's creation and then in His new creation work. The communication of life, the whole work of sanctification, the resurrection of the dead, is His to carry into effect; and this through all dispensations. But this very fact, while it suits well the nature of the place which He has come to fill, shows at the same time that the place itself must imply something other than the work that He has always done. He has come to form and indwell the House of God on earth, and to make the saints individually His living temples. He has come to unite the people of Christ to Himself in heaven, and thus to form also the Body of Christ, with destinies of wondrous blessedness. All this will only open up by degrees, John himself never speaking of the Church, but of the family of God,—of the life therefore which makes men His children. But that this also may have its full character, the Spirit of God must come: in this way the Lord now proceeds to speak of Him.

It is noticeable that it is to disciples who out of love to Him, and not in a spirit of legality, are seeking to keep His commandments, that the Lord promises the gift of the Holy Spirit. If the Spirit be come to dwell in us, the first requisite is readiness of obedience. Wondrous are the possibilities held out to us in this marvelous gift; but marvelous also is the possibility we have of belittling even a gift like this. The Galatians had it, who were giving up the gospel for the law. The Corinthians had it, who were carnal, and walked as men. It belongs to the mystery of our nature that we may have as though we had not. It belongs to the royalty of it that we may debase ourselves. Stranger still is it that the children of this world may be wiser in their generation than the children of light, and that the Lord should even have to put this as if a characteristic thing. Were we not unfaithful to ourselves and to God, how would the world be lighted up with the reflection of the glory that is in the unveiled face of Jesus! how we should go through the world as visitants from another sphere! Thus we need not wonder that the Lord should almost seem to put it as if the gift of the Spirit were dependent upon the reality of one's obedience. What! can we have God in us, and entertain Him so poorly? Nothing could make such a thing credible but the sad experience of so lamentable a fact. Yes, men who KNOW that Christ has died for them,—who KNOW that the Spirit of God dwells in them,—who KNOW that God's way is the only way of peace and joy and power,—can yet live and act as if nothing of all this were true. We can give up certainties of blessing for certainties of spiritual loss! Who can enough bewail the misery of such unaccountable folly?

Let us learn now from the Lord's lips what this gift is of which He is speaking to us; the fruit of the Son's entreaty with the Father, a divine Person with us,—in us,—never to leave us more! One who with perfect wisdom, perfect love, and perfect power, takes our case into His hand, leaving us nothing to do but to walk with Him in restful confidence and certainty of unfailing good. Yet not to be led blindly, or without exercise, but as one being trained in communion with the divine thoughts and affections, for eternal fellowship with the Father and the Son!

Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how cometh it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not unto the [q]world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If any one [r]love me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our [s]abode with him. He that [t]loveth me not keepeth not my words: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but my Father's who sent me. These things have I said unto you while abiding with you: but the

q cf. Gen. 5. 22. *cf.* 1Jno.3.1. *cf.*Col.3.3,4.
r ch. 15. 10. *cf.*1Jno.5.3.
s cf. ver. 2. *cf.* Is.57.15. *cf.* Rev. 3. 20.
t cf. Gal.5.6. *cf.*Jas.2.14-17.

This Spirit is the "Spirit of truth:" the false halo of Satan's lure thrown over things, the mirage of the desert, is to depart; not to leave one with a mere sombre shadow in its place, but to substitute for it the true yet transfiguring light of an opened heaven, beckoning,—inviting us to the abodes of the Father's House,—the glory of God! Darkness there is still remaining, but it is passing away, as the apostle says, and the true light already shines (1 John ii. 8).

For the Spirit of truth is now to utter the "many things" of which the heart of Christ has long been full, but as yet unable to relieve itself; for there were none able to bear the things to be spoken. Think of it! all this is uttered now, to the very last we are to have of revelation; and the Revealer Himself is with us, to give spiritual capacity for its reception. The light is now come to illumine all the ages past with the glory of the ages still to come! light that is its own convincing witness to the soul flooded with its brilliance. Yet the world, alas! cannot receive the Spirit. It has rejected the Word manifest in flesh, and will not receive One whom it cannot see: "it beholdeth Him not, nor knoweth Him." But receptive, obedient souls have good cause to know Him: "for He dwelleth with you,"—as Christ had dwelt with them; but there was to be an intimacy even beyond this;—"He dwelleth with you, and *shall be in* you." This was to be the new blessedness,—God no more dwelling in temples made with hands, but man to be His temple.

After this manner then, Christ would still be with them; they were not to be orphans, left to the helplessness that His very presence had discovered to them. The Spirit would be for them the conscious link with the unseen but unforgetting Saviour. While the world would behold Him no more, they would still behold Him, with whose triumphant life in glory their life was bound up. This identification in life with Him is the connecting link with Paul's doctrine afterward, who developes from it the whole truth of Christian standing as we find it in Romans and Ephesians; as upon the basis of the Spirit's indwelling he builds the truth of the Church as the Body of Christ. If Luke in some sense approach nearest to Paul's gospel, as is so often, and not without cause, insisted on, yet John is most nearly related to him with respect to all his higher truths of Christian position. This we shall see better, if the Lord permit us to go on to the Epistles; but it should not be hard to realize already. So directly He assures us here: "At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." We shall be better able, however, to apprehend the meaning of this when we come to His own development of it in the next section.

The Lord goes on to show that this manifestation of Himself will be necessarily dependent on, and therefore proportionate to the opening of the heart to receive it. The heart for Christ moreover is indicated not so much by emotional sensitiveness as by the spirit of obedience which has itself also higher or lower grades which require careful noting, though in themselves quite easy to be apprehended. In his first epistle John emphasizes the same thing. The apostle of love is careful to insist that the love of which he speaks is liable to very grave mistakes in men's estimate of it. It is not so simple as it would appear, to make the estimate. You have to distinguish between sentiment and practical reality;—the world in general easily does this;—and then you have to distin-

Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall [u]teach you all things, and bring all things to your [v]remembrance which I have said unto you. [w]Peace I leave with you: [x]my peace I give unto you: [y]not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be [z]troubled, nor let it be afraid.

[u] ch. 16. 13. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 20, 27.
[v] *cf.* ch. 2. 22.
[w] *cf.* ch. 20. 19. *cf.* Col. 1. 20.
[x] *cf.* ch. 16. 33. *cf.* Col. 3. 15.

cf. Matt. 11. 29. [y] *cf.* ch. 16. 22; *cf.* 2 Cor. 6. 10. [z] ver. 1; *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 18.

guish, as the world can scarcely do, between the mere human quality and the divine. Thus love with John is characterized especially as love, not of men in general, but of the *brethren:* for he that loveth Him that begat loveth them also that are begotten of Him. And again, as here, it is love that keeps His commandments: for "this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments."

So the Lord says: "He that hath My commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." Here evidently, though a man have the Spirit, the fruits of the Spirit will be found only in the way of practical obedience. How else could we expect them? Can we think that God would comfort His people in paths of disobedience? That would be unholiness, and abhorrent to His very nature. No: love itself must walk contrary to us, if we will walk contrary: "he that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Prov. xiii. 24).

The question of Judas (the Lebbæus of Matthew, and brother of James the son of Alphæus),—although the Lord seems not to have distinctly answered it,—brings out the further assurance, "If any one love Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

This statement might appear at first sight to be only the equivalent of the former one; although it is plain that the latter is more emphatic. In each case it is the character of true love of which the Lord is speaking; and indeed it seems as if He would not suppose in His disciples a love less than such as He is speaking of. John follows his Master's style, when he bursts out in his impassioned way when speaking of the Lord, (which yet is truer than the most rigorous induction of facts could suggest) "he that sinneth hath not seen Him, neither known Him." It is the only thing to be said, to speak worthily; and he that falsifies it is in that measure not a true witness to his Saviour-Lord.

True also it is, that something of both characters of love, as Christ affirms them, will be found in all true Christians,—overborne so much by contrary influences that like Peter in the high priest's palace, only He who knoweth all things can detect the true disciple underneath the false. There is the false within us all, as well as the true; alas, in many, so often uppermost. The results cannot fail to follow: the blessing of which the Lord speaks attaches to that with which He here connects it. We find it in proportion as we answer to the character.

Looked at in this way, there is no difficulty in seeing the deeper nature of a love that keeps Christ's word, as compared with that which keeps commandments only. Not to keep a positive command is simple, rank rebellion,—nothing less. His "word" is wider, while it addresses itself with less positiveness of authority to the one whose heart and conscience are less prompt to the appeal of love. And the largeness of Christ's word involves for keeping it an habitual searching into it, with more than readiness to face all that may be thus discovered. Is it not to be feared that there are many who shrink from honest investigation of the Word, because they do not want to be "troubled" with such and such questions? Nay, is not this one of the commonest causes of the sad ignorance which is found so widely prevalent with regard to it? But were ignorance an excuse, and we were so unhappy as to desire one, it is plain that the deeper the ignorance the better off we should be; and the dullest searcher would be the most blameless also!

4 (28-31): Christ's departure and the failure of His own.

4. Ye have [a]heard that I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would have [b]rejoiced that* I go unto the Father: for the Father is [c]greater than I. And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye may [d]believe. I will no longer speak much with you: for the [e]prince of the world cometh, and in me he hath nothing. But that the world may know that I [f]love the Father, even as the Father gave me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

*Or, "because."

[a] ch. 13. 33. ver. 3.
[b] cf. ch. 17. 13 with Heb. 12. 2.
[c] cf. ch. 10. 29, 30. cf. Heb. 2. 7.
[d] ch. 13. 19. ch. 16. 4.
[e] ch. 12. 31. ch. 16. 11. cf. Lk. 4. 6. cf. 2 Cor. 4. 4. cf. Eph. 2. 2.
[f] cf. ch. 15. 10. cf. ch. 11. 41, 42. cf. ch. 12. 50.

But how the Lord delights in the one who with a true spirit of obedience welcomes the light of divine truth without any reserve or qualification whatever! Not only will He manifest Himself to him, but "My Father will love him, and We will come and make our abode with him." How much fuller and more permanent is the blessing here! To the two at Emmaus the Lord manifested Himself; but there was no tarrying of that coveted blessing. And how many of us are in like condition! Transient gleams there are of a glory that abides not, and which leaves the soul burning but mourning after it. But there is something more than this in our Lord's words here. "We will come," He says, "and make our abode with him." The result will be to manifest the competence of Scripture for the "man of God," to whom alone it is pledged as competent, —"able to furnish thoroughly unto all good works." Who is the man of God, but he who is out and out for God? and who else can expect to be furnished in this way, but he who is honestly intentioned to use his knowledge as before Him who gave it? The very passage which we are quoting here reminds us of where the profit is to be found: "all Scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." If we do not mean to accept the reproof and the correction, where is the use of talking about the rest?

In God's ordered path alone can we find God. In His marked out way it would be *impossible not* to find Him.

"He that loveth Me not keepeth not My words:" here only is the decisive test. Feeling is right, but too sensitive to external influences to be a safe gauge of the man proper. The truest love is shy and sensitive to self-inquiry. Under its influence we are more apt to challenge and accuse ourselves than to congratulate. Nor need we this introspection: let us walk only in His ways, and we shall find the Lord's own acknowledgment. We shall find Him walking and talking with us, as has been always His manner with His own: we shall find Him treating us as those of whom He is not ashamed.

And this is communion with the Father and the Son: "for the word which ye hear is not Mine,"—not simply Mine,—"but My Father's who sent Me."

And now they were to receive the full revelation: the Advocate, the Holy Spirit,—sent too from the Father as He had been, but now in His Name which covered all of blessing for them,—*He* would teach them all things: leading them on, as well as reviving and giving them the full value of all that they had heard with Him. The effect for them would be peace in the heart, even as the legacy of His death was peace in the conscience. They would have the peace He Himself enjoyed,—the result of that unbroken communion in which He walked with God. For us it is restlessness of will disturbs this,—the strife with His will which this means, and the dissatisfaction of soul which follows every gain we may seem to make in this direction. Desiring but His will, there can be no proper doubt as to the issue. *That* is as sure as it will be blessed; and thus the true remedy for fear is found.

4. Now they should be able to face the fact of His departure which they knew to be but for a time. Nay, they should, if they loved Him, be able to rejoice

SECTION 4. (Chap. xv. 1-16.)

The incoming change from Judaism to Christianity, and the test of profession in practical walk.

1(1-8): Abiding in the vine the only sufficiency.

1. I AM the [g] true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman. Every [h] branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that [i] beareth fruit he purgeth* it, that it may bear more fruit. Pure* are ye [j] already by reason of the word that I have spoken unto you. [k] Abide in me, and [l] I in you. As the branch [m] cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the

*The same root.

g *cf.* Ps. 80. 8-11. *cf.* Is. 5. 1-7. *cf.* Jer. 2. 21. *cf.* Is. 42. 1. *cf.* Is. 63. 5.
h *cf.* Matt. 3. 10. *cf.* Rom. 11. 17, 21.
i *cf.* Matt. 13. 12. *cf.* Heb. 12. 5-11. *cf.* Rom. 5. 3, 4. *cf.* ch. 17. 17.
j *cf.* ch. 13. 10. *cf.* Eph. 5. 26; *cf.* Lev. 13. 6.
k vers. 5-7; *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 28; *cf.* Heb. 10. 38, 39.
l *cf.* ch. 17. 23; *cf.* Eph. 3. 17.
m *cf.* Rom. 8. 10.
n *cf.* Rom. 8. 3; *cf.* Rom. 5. 6; *cf.* Rom. 7. 18.

that He was going to the Father,—back to Him who abode in that exaltation which He, on His errand of love, had given up. Yet it would bring to an end for the time the intercourse that He had had with them. Nor was the world a place in which this could continue. The world!—its prince was coming; how different from Himself, its rightful Prince! Nay, there was nothing in common between them: the prince of the world had nothing in Him! Yet to the world He was giving proof, in that through which He was thus to pass, of His love to the Father. But the world being what it was, He was leaving it; and for those that were His also, it was no tarrying place: "Arise," He says, "let us go hence."

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Christ is then leaving the world, and His own, who are still in it, are yet not of it. As a consequence, Judaism is given up, and part with Christ takes the place of part with the nation of Israel. This is, most evidently, the meaning of the Lord now proclaiming Himself the true Vine, and His disciples "branches" in this. The vine was the Lord's figure of Israel in Isaiah (chap. v.). It is as evident also that the vine is the symbol of what is looked to for bearing fruit, and that it is for bearing wild fruit that Israel is rooted out of her vineyard. In the Christianity which takes the place of Judaism on the earth, much more then is fruit the necessary requisite. And that is plainly what is insisted on here.

1. First, we see what is alone sufficiency for the fruit required. It is what is implied in the very nature of a branch,—to abide in the vine: apart from Christ we can do nothing. If the branch abide not in the vine, the vine—the vine-sap—cannot abide in the branch; and this is the reason of the connection and order which the Lord's words indicate: "Abide in Me, and I in you." "Abide in Me,"—that is the command,—the responsibility; "and I in you,"—that will be the assured result. But let us look in detail at what is here before us.

"I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Husbandman." We are looking evidently, at what has to do with the earth: and as evidently, the true Vine is in contrast with Israel, as already said. Christ now openly takes the place which was ever His, of the real Source of all fruitfulness for God. The legal system would have made Christ the topmost Branch of the national tree, but no more: for if man could have stood under it, he would have needed no Saviour: his fruitfulness would have been of himself. But this was a means of probation only: God giving abundant testimony of what He intended by it in plain words as to the issue, as well as in that sacrificial and typical ritual which accompanied it and pointed beyond it. It was to be by a new covenant that blessing was to come to the nation, and not by the old, Sinaitic one; which testified ever by its vail dropped over the face of God that none could on that ground see or stand before Him.

The vine too is the natural figure of dependence, and needs constantly the

Vine: ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for [n]apart from me ye can do nothing. If any one abide not in me, he is [o]cast forth as a branch, and is withered: and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they

[n] *ctr.* Phil. 1. 11. *ctr.* Phil. 4. 13.

[o] ver. 2. *cf.* Matt. 25. 30.

labor of the husbandman; and into such a dependent condition did the Son of God come down, that He might be the Producer of fruit for God, such as yet had never been, as well as the Pattern of fruitfulness also, wherever found. In Him was the life of faith seen in its perfection. If the branches are in Him, and so He in them, as the productive life-sap,—so does He speak also of being in the Father, and of the Father in Him:—"The Father who abideth in Me, *He* doeth the works." We see thus how the figure of the vine underlies all these expressions. The dependent Man, in whom the Father abides reproduces Himself in His believing people who abide in Him. He is the Vine, they are the branches: He is in them, not personally, but as life and nature: and they are in Him as products of His life, abiding in Him by that faith which is characteristic of it.

The Life is the Divine Life; and thus we hear in the Son's prayer which follows His request, "that they all may be one, *as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they may be one in Us;*" and so also the apostle who so closely follows Him, declares: "If that which ye heard in the beginning abide in you, ye also shall abide in the Son, and in the Father."

But there is a never to be forgotten difference between the believer and His Lord, which these very words imply: if he can be said, as the apostle here affirms, to be "in the Father," and that seem to even him too much with the Son of God Himself, the preceding "in the Son" shows the way of it to be only through the Father's own love—the gift of His Son for men. We are in the Son, and *thus* in the Father: for us that is mediatorial wholly, which for Him was the necessary prerogative of His glorious Person. Only the Son Himself could be in this way in the Father; and thus His declaration of this as to Himself was the necessary claim of Deity.

Life, as we have it, is in the Son (1 John v. 11). He is the Eternal Life itself,—the Source of it for men; thus the "Last Adam" of the new creation. And here is the foundation of Paul's doctrine as to Christian position, as already said. John's is not position: for the Son's position cannot be ours; and John says "in the Father," as well as "in the Son;" where position cannot be thought of.

The figure of the vine and its branches thus clearly illustrates the truth of that vital connection between Christ and His people which is what in Christianity has replaced the formal and sacramental connection which obtained in Judaism. It is quite true that there is here supposed however a possibility of a connection which is still formal merely. There is the necessity dwelt upon of *abiding* in the vine. The one that abides not is cast forth as a branch, and is withered and burnt. In this case, of course, the one who comes to his end in such a way could never have been a branch in vital union with Christ; or the whole doctrine as to life in Scripture would be violated. But in what branch of a vine, it will be asked, has the sap never circulated? and in what other than vital connection could one speak of a branch in the vine?

The question is not answered here; and to answer it one must appeal to similar images elsewhere. We are most naturally reminded of the broken off branches of the olive, of which the apostle speaks in Romans xi. Here, without raising question as to the meaning of the olive itself, the branches are distinctly said to be broken off for unbelief, and those who stand to "stand by faith." The interpretation of the vine is so far confirmed, that those broken off are those who have no spiritual life at all. The principle of continuance is that of faith.

Nor only so; for the Gentile had no part in the olive at the beginning; he is

are [p]burned. If ye abide in me, and my [q]words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father [r]glorified, that ye bear much fruit, and ye shall become [s]disciples of mine.

[p] *cf.* Matt. 13. 40-42. *cf.* Heb. 6. 8.
[q] *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 14. *cf.* Col. 3. 16 *cf.* ch. 14. 13.

cf. 1 Jno. 5. 14, 15. [r] *cf.* 2 Cor. 9. 13; *cf.* Matt. 5. 16; *cf.* Tit. 2. 10. [s] *cf.* ch. 8. 31; *cf.* ch. 13. 35.

not a natural branch, but grafted in—as the apostle is careful to tell us, "contrary to nature"—into the good olive, out of the wild olive to which he naturally belonged. This "grafting" is common to all Gentiles; but where, as in the vine here, Christ is the stock, it is clearly true that there are no natural branches,—that *every one* must be grafted in. Now here it is plain that every graft does not abide, or, as we say, "strike." The "abiding" is just *striking:* it is the rooting itself in the stock,—a vivid image of faith's laying hold, which, looking at things from the human side of responsibility insisted upon in the exhortation in this case, makes us partakers in the preciousness of Christ our life.

"My Father is the husbandman,"—although it has been applied by some to the divine dealing with Christ Himself,—is applied by the Lord evidently to His dealing with His people. "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bear more fruit."

The vine, as already said, is the ideal of a fruit-bearer. It is fit for nothing else. "Shall wood be taken thereof, to do any work?" asks the Lord by the prophet; "or will men take a pin of it, to hang any vessel thereon?" (Ezek. xv. 3). "I looked for it to bring forth grapes," He says again of Israel as His vine (Isa. v. 2). This is what still the Father looks for from us. And notice that it is not works, of which the vine speaks. Works may be fruit, assuredly, and blessed fruit; still, works are acts, which may have a certain character; fruit speaks more properly of the character itself. Thus "the fruit of the Spirit," says the apostle in Galatians (ch. v. 22, 23), "is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance." These are things which show the life in the branch; in activities, no doubt; but they belong more to the person than do the activities. Moreover, the apostle speaks of them as fruit, not fruits: he dwells more upon the unity exhibited than the variety. And this is a blessed character of the Spirit's workmanship, that it is a complete harmonious development, in which every part is in evident relationship with the rest. Love that "seeketh not her own" shines out along the line of these jewels, pervading them all, and not merely stringing them together.

If, therefore, there is no fruit, there is manifestly no life: the branch that bears no fruit has no title to the vine; it can only be taken away. If it bear fruit, then comes the "purging" that it may bear more fruit. Whatever this may include beside, the Lord's words that follow show certainly that the Word is the effectual means by which this purging is accomplished. "Purged,"—or "clean,"—He says, "ye are already, by reason of the word that I have spoken unto you." The Word is that which judges all that is impure in God's sight, while by its sweet encouraging grace, it wins and divorces the heart from it. Any one who is in the least acquainted with vine-culture knows how much pruning it requires, to make a vine bear proper fruit. It is most instructive to realize that this pruning is not necessarily the taking away of what is merely, or in itself evil: leaves and branches,—even if fruitless branches, do not naturally speak of this. The injury that they do lies in squandering the precious sap; which again does not so much lessen the quantity of the fruit produced, as it affects the quality. The things by which Christian fruitfulness are most seriously affected are apt to be, not so much things positively evil: these bear their brand upon their face, for the most part: and the conscience, if it be not dull indeed, is roused against them. It is rather the negative than the positive quality which is dangerous. It is occupation with that which simply has not

2 (9-16): Communion in love.

2. As the Father hath [t]loved me, I also have loved you: [u]abide ye in my love. If ye [v]keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love: even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I said unto you, that my [w]joy may be in you, and your joy may be full. This is my [z]commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you. Greater love hath no one than this, that a man [y]lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, [z]if ye

x ch. 13. 34; 1 Jno. 4. 21. *y cf.* ch. 10. 15; *cf.* Rom. 5. 6-10; *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 10. *z cf.* Matt. 12. 49, 50; *ctr.* Lk. 6. 46.

t cf. ch.5.20. *cf.*ch.17.26. *cf.*ch.10.14, 15.
u cf. Gal. 2. 20.
v ch. 14. 15, 21, 23. *cf.*ch.10.17, 18.
w cf. ch. 17. 13. *cf.*ch.14.27. *cf.*ch.16.24.

Christ in it, which (tolerated for its very harmlessness) insensibly steals away the vigor of spiritual life. Lawful things, as the apostle reminds us, may bring us thus under their power; and even the name of "duty" may be invoked to cover with its sanction what is in reality only the slipping of the heart away from its first duty to Him who has redeemed and purchased us with His blood.

The lesson of the vine is here that of the need of concentration: of which Paul, in his epistle to the Philippians, gives us so pregnant an example. His "one thing I do" is the only principle for Christian progress, or happiness either. It ensures both. The knowledge of the new man teaches him that "Christ is ALL:" and we cannot broaden or brighten the spiritual life by adding anything to Him.

"Abide in Me" is therefore what He exhorts to:—to realize our dependence, and cultivate that faith which is the acknowledgment of it, and which brought us to Him at first, as the Only-sufficient and All-sufficient Saviour in that hour of supreme distress. Saviour He is still, and all through; not least from our own will and way:—the principle of sin, and the sure road to disaster. To be true to what was our first happiness is to make permanent that happiness; to abide in Him is to find Him in His fulness abiding in us, and all His promises interpreted to us by their fulfilment in the experiences of a blessed and fruitful life. It is only, as has been already said, what is implied in our very Christianity itself: for he who does not abide in Christ in some true sense, is not a Christian. But, alas! we need the exhortation: who will say that Christians do not need to be exhorted to *be* Christians? "He that abideth in Me, and I in Him, the same beareth *much* fruit." We only need to be fully what we really are:—not to be untrue to our God, our Saviour, and ourselves.

Now comes the warning: "If any one abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered:" that is the spiritual result, as the words "as a *branch*," indicate: but there follows the final judgment, in that figurative language in which it is so commonly described: "and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." The change has been often noted in this place from "ye" to "any one." The Lord would not have it supposed that it might be possible for those who are truly His to be thus cast forth and to perish: therefore His altered speech. He returns, however, immediately now to His former direct address: "If *ye* abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Here is a further condition, and which certifies, in the same manner as we have seen His language do elsewhere, the character of the prayer to which He pledges success. If His words abide in us, they will give shape to our desires and requests, so that He can answer them without injuring us or contradicting His own character. But if we thus drank in His words, what wondrous power would our prayers possess! Why do we not know more of it? There can be but one reply: we too little yield ourselves to be possessed by these precious words,—care often too little to face them. They demand too much of us. We would sooner pursue our own wills, giving Him what we may consider a fair proportion of what is His, and hoping He will not expect too much from such as we are. Of how

do whatsoever I command you. I call you no longer [a] bondservants: for the bondservant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard from my Father I have made [b] known unto you. Ye have not chosen me, but I have [c] chosen you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear [d] fruit, and that your fruit should abide: that [e] whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, he may give it you.

a *cf.* Rom. 8. 15. *cf.* ch. 8. 34–36.
b *cf.* ch. 17. 26. *cf.* ch. 16. 13.
c ch. 6. 70. *cf.* ch. 13. 18. *cf.* Eph. 1. 4.
d ver. 8.
e ver. 7.

much we rob ourselves, in thus robbing Him, we shall learn, it may be when it cannot be righted.

He would touch our hearts with another thought, that His Father will be glorified in our bearing *much* fruit: and we shall become such as He can count true disciples of His own. A precious inducement! in which He appeals to our hearts, and expects them to respond to affection so well proved. Have we not dropped out a good deal out of that term so full of meaning, except as applying it to these men of a by-gone day? Is it not perhaps significant, if we have done so?

2. The Lord goes on to speak of the new position in which, as delivered from the law, they were placed,—no longer servants, but friends,—and of the communion in love implied in this. The disciples of Moses were bondsmen of the law under which they were placed, and had even no access to God,—the way into the holiest not being yet manifested (Heb. ix. 8). Grace was now changing all. They had looked upon the glory of the Word made flesh,—the glory of the Only-begotten of the Father, in whom the Father Himself was declared and seen. God had come nigh: and now, if He who declared Him were going back to heaven, heaven could not be closed by this, but rather opened. God come nigh, for those who welcomed this, could be no transient vision. But, for one near God, bondservice is no more possible: communion in love must take the place of the former distance: and this is the subject here.

As Christ on earth had been the Object of His Father's love, so now were His people that of His. As to Him it was a love of complacent delight: walking as He did in His Father's commandments, the One Man answering to the heart of God; He would have them answering similarly to His own heart, walking in His commandments, so as to be partakers of the joy which He had tasted, even amid all the sorrow of His path. He desired for them fulness of this joy. And as He had loved them, even to the laying down His life for them, so was it His commandment that they should love one another: and so they would be still in fellowship with His love.

He was laying down His life for them,—His friends: how could they have greater proof that such they were indeed? Friends! and no longer servants: no more did He call them that: for, instead of mere messages of their duty, He had been opening to them all the truth as to those purposes of the Father with which He had been entrusted. And such is Scripture for us now: with a length and breadth and depth and height in it which befits such a communication from the Father to the Son as that of which the Son here speaks.

This love was at the foundation of all for them: and to it they owed, and we owe, that choice which was on His side, not on ours. "Ye have not chosen Me," He says, "but I have chosen you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide: that whatsoever ye should ask the Father in My Name, He may give it you." Thus in conscious weakness the power of God is with us: and as He sought us when lost,—when there was nothing but our misery to awaken His compassion, so we may count assuredly upon Him, whatever our helplessness, to perfect the work He has begun. What comfort lies for us in that royal word, "I have chosen you!"

But grace enables us to fulfill the conditions necessarily imposed by the holi-

SECTION 5. (Chaps. xv. 17–xvi. 27.)
A new place with God.

1 (17-25): Identified with Christ for love or hate.

1. THESE things I [f]command you, that ye love one another. If the world [g]hate you, ye know that it hath hated me, before you. If ye were of the world the world would [h]love its own: but because ye are [i]not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The [j]bondservant is not greater than his lord. If they have [k]persecuted me, they will also persecute you: If they have kept my word, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they [l]know not him that sent me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had [m]sin: but now they have no pretext for their sin. He that [n]hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not [o]done among them the works that no other hath done, they had not had sin, but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this is that the word may be [p]fulfilled

2 (26-xvi.3): His witnesses in the world.

which is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

2. When the [q]Advocate is come, whom I will send unto

[f] ver. 12.
[g] *cf.* 1 Jno. 3. 1, 13. *cf.* 2 Tim. 3. 12.
[h] *cf.* Gen. 39. 14. *cf.* Jas. 4. 4. *cf.* Gal. 1. 10. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 15.
[i] ch. 17. 14, 16. *cf.* Phil. 3. 20.
[j] ch. 13. 16.
[k] *cf.* ch. 16. 1, 33. *cf.* 1 Cor. 4. 11-13.
[l] ch. 16. 3. *cf.* ch. 8. 19. *cf.* 1 Cor. 2. 8.
[m] *cf.* ch. 9. 41. *cf.* Lk. 12. 47, 48.
[n] *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 23. *cf.* ch. 5. 23.
[o] *cf.* ch. 12. 37-41. *cf.* Acts 2. 22, 23.
[p] *cf.* Ps. 35. 19. *cf.* Ps. 69. 4.
[q] ch. 14. 16, 26.

ness of the divine nature:—and cannot set these aside: therefore the closing words. They are in the same line with others that we have lately heard: which they emphasize only in a somewhat different way. Fruit that *abides* is that which alone satisfies God. How much that looks well has not that quality in it which ensures permanence. How much that seems truly of God reveals its character by its decay! This "abiding" connects itself, in the Gospel of John, with the divine side of things which is seen all through.

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All this involves, as has been seen, a new place with God. We must not expect to have it presented as we find it done by Paul at an attertime. Only by degrees could the full truth be made known: and for this the Spirit of truth Himself must come. What we have now before us is the result of Christ's departure from the world. His disciples being left in it as His representatives and witnesses, with the Spirit also in it, and the consequences of this, while with the Father there would be enjoyed a freedom of access in His Name before unknown. It is in fact a new place with God, but in practical life down here, which is so much the theme in all John's doctrinal unfolding.

1. The identification of His disciples with their Lord, whose representatives on earth they are now to be, is the first thing here. The world itself would identify them. The hatred with which it had followed Him it would now show to His people. They need not wonder at it. If they were separated from it in spirit and character, as also by His choice of them to be His own outside it, then there was consistency in such opposition. *He* could not commend Himself: how could they? His persecutors would, of course, be theirs: while those who kept His word would keep theirs also. The Object of their hatred was, above all, Himself, and ultimately the Father, who had sent Him. They had had fullest evidence of His mission in His words and works: works unparalleled by those of any other: so that the sin of their rejection of Him was manifest. They hated, alas! both Himself and His Father. Their own Scripture had been fulfilled, "They hated Me without a cause."

2. Amid all this opposition, they were not alone to be His representatives,

you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who goeth forth from the Father, he shall [r]testify of me: and ye [s]also shall bear witness, because ye are with me [s]from the beginning. These things have I spoken unto you, that ye may not be stumbled. They shall [t]put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh when he that [t]killeth you will think that he offereth God service. And these things will they do, because they have not [u]known the Father nor me. But these things have I spoken unto you, that when their* hour cometh, ye may [x]remember them, that I told you [of them].

3 (4-15): The manifestation of the Spirit.

3. And these things I told you not at the beginning, because [y]I was with you; but now I go away to him that sent me: and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? but because I have said these

r 1 Jno. 5. 6. cf. Acts 5. 32. cf. 1 Cor. 12. 3.
s Lk. 24. 48. Acts 10. 39, 41.
t cf. Acts 1. 21, 22. cf. 1 Jno. 1. 1.
u cf. ch. 9. 34. cf. ch. 12. 42. cf. Acts 13. 50.
v cf. Acts 7. 58, 59. cf. Acts 22. 20. cf. Acts 26. 9.
w ch. 15. 21.
x ch. 13. 19. ch. 14. 29.
y cf. Matt. 9. 15. cf. ch. 17. 12.

*Some read "the."

but His witnesses: they and the Spirit whom He would send to them from the Father. There would be thus a double witness,— the unseen Spirit being known in the mighty works which would be done. He would be in this way also the Advocate, plead for God and for His people, even though it might be to deaf ears. As the Spirit of truth also, the truth would commend itself to the conscience, if the heart were closed. Their own testimony would be that of men in personal acquaintance with those details of His life and ways which they have, in fact, made known to us. The human witness would be a natural and needed supplement to the divine.

Spite of all, it was necessary to warn them that the opposition of the world to Him would not thus be overcome. They would be put out of the synagogues: nay, men's hearts would so pervert their consciences that they would kill them, and offer that to God as acceptable service. We find this conspicuously enough in such an one as Saul of Tarsus, "concerning zeal, persecuting the Church:" so little does a good conscience certify a soul to be right with God!

3. The Lord goes on to speak again of the coming of the Spirit, with regard to the character of His testimony. So important for them was it that it was even expedient that He should depart, that the Advocate might come. Again He speaks of Him by that assuring title, which declares how thoroughly He has made their cause His own. According to the divine purpose, Christ must go to the Father, or the Spirit would not come; for it is to a glorified Christ that He testifies. Christianity in its full character is, in fact, the fruit of His ascension, as Paul makes fully plain, who was Himself converted by the "gospel of the glory" (2 Cor. iv. 4, 6).

For this, however, we must yet wait: here we have, first, the result of the presence of the Spirit thus sent from the rejected One in glory, as the necessary demonstration of the world's sin, with the judgment of its prince, and the manifestation of the Father's righteousness. "He will convict" does not necessarily imply that men will receive the conviction. The guilty do not necessarily own the righteousness of their sentence. The world assuredly does not own it. None the less has God demonstrated the guilt of the world, and placed men under responsibility to receive His sentence. There lies the way into inconceivable blessing in that salvation for the guilty which the gospel proclaims.

Christ has been in the world: He has been rejected and cast out of it; it is too plain to be denied that He died a malefactor's death. Men may say for themselves, that individually they had no hand in it. This they do say: how is it possible they can be guilty of what was done by men of another race and of another time? Well, look at the Jew in the centuries that have elapsed since

things unto you, [z]sorrow hath filled your heart. But I tell you the truth: it is [a]expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the [b]Advocate will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will [c]convict the world of sin, and of [d]righteousness, and of [e]judgment. Of sin, because they [f]believe not on me: of righteousness, because I [g]go unto my Father, and ye see me no more: of judgment, because the [h]prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot [i]bear them now: but when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will [j]guide you into all truth: for he will not speak [k]from himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to [l]come. He shall [m]glorify me, for he shall take of mine and announce it to you. All things that the Father hath are [n]mine: therefore I said that he taketh of what is mine, and shall announce it to you.

z ver. 22. *cf.* ch. 14.1.
a cf. ch.7.38, 39. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 16.
b ch. 15. 26.
c cf. Acts 2. 37.
d cf. Acts 7. 52.
e cf. Acts 2. 19, 20.
f cf. ch. 3.18, 19.
g cf. Acts 3. 13. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 21.
h cf. Heb. 2. 14. *cf.* ch.12.31. *cf.* Col.2.15.
i cf. Mk. 4. 33.
j ch. 14. 26. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 20, 21.
k cf. ch.5.19.
l cf. 1 Cor. 2. 9, 10; *cf.* Gal. 5.5. *m cf.* ch. 7. 39; *cf.* Gen. 24. 35, 36; *cf.* Num. 8. 2-4; *cf.* 2 Cor. 3. 17, 18. *n cf.* ch. 17. 10; *cf.* Matt. 11. 27; *cf.* ch. 13. 3.

then: has not His blood been upon them, and on their children? Have they not bought for themselves "a field to bury strangers in" with the "price of blood?" If Christ was not what He claimed, was He not worthy of the sentence under which He suffered? If you do not believe in Him, do you not affirm that sentence to be righteous? Who were these Jews, who put Him to death? Were they not a people carefully prepared for centuries to receive the One they rejected? If you had been among them, would not you have rejected Him too?

Scripture at any rate affirms that "as in water face answereth to face, so the *heart* of man to man." It does not say that the *life* is the same, and the difference in this respect may be due to many causes: but it says, the *heart* is. And it speaks of Israel as a field specially cared for and cultivated, to show precisely what one may expect from the soil of the human heart. Their own law had given a dreadful description, drawn too from experience, of what God had found in them: and the apostle, quoting it, says, "We know that whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law." Granted, you say perhaps, but that is Israel. See then how he concludes: what the law says it does indeed say to those who are under the law:—true, but for what purpose? why, "that *every* mouth may be stopped, and *all the world* become guilty before God" (Rom. iii. 19). That is, Israel is not an exception as to man's state before God, but rather, *an unexceptionably perfect example.* If Israel be found such as this, one need go no further,—the whole world is condemned.

This, though the sentence of the law, applies as well, as must be evident, to the rejection of Christ. The unbelief for which the world is condemned is naturally characteristic of us all: and those who are brought to receive Him are just those who will most fully own this; the language of the prophet will be theirs: "He was despised and rejected of men: a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not." If there be difference as to any, it is the mercy of God that has made the difference.

But the presence of the Spirit convicts the world also of righteousness: "of righteousness, because I go unto the Father, and ye see Me no more." We hear in the prayer that follows, His appeal in this way: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee: and these have known that Thou hast sent Me." Here He puts in contrast the world, which is about to demonstrate its ignorant hatred of the Father by the murder of the Son, with Himself, against whom they are showing their enmity. In this open conflict,

4 (16–22): The change from sorrow to joy.

4. A [o]little while, and ye no longer behold me, and again a little while and ye [p]shall see me; because* I I [q]go to the Father. Some of his disciples said therefore to one another, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while and ye behold me not, and again a little and ye shall see me: and because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? We [r]know not of what he speaketh. Jesus knew therefore that they were desirous to ask him, and he said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of this that I said, A little while and ye behold me not, and again a little while and ye shall see me? Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall [s]weep and lament, and the world shall [t]rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be [u]turned into

* Some omit this clause, but its recurrence in the next verse shows it should be retained.

o *cf.* ch.7.33.
p *cf.* ver. 22. *cf.* ch.14.19.
q *cf.* ver. 10, 28.
r *cf.* Mk. 9. 10, 32. *cf.* ch.12.16.
s *cf.* Lk. 23. 27, 28. *cf.* Matt. 9. 15.
t *cf.* Rev.11. 10. *cf.* 1 Kl. 21. 16.
u *cf.* Lk. 24. 41. *cf.* 1 Pet.1.3. *cf.* Ps. 30.5.

with whom will He show Himself? His accusers dare to condemn Him in the Father's Name; and the bitter cry upon the Cross might seem to justify their accusations. He must come openly out and show with whom He is: and in resurrection from the dead God manifests Himself accordingly. He rises, and with abundant witness, but not to show Himself to the unbelieving world, but to return in glory to the Father. The world sees Him no more till He comes back to judge it. God and the world are in demonstrated opposition.

Righteousness has acted: and righteousness will act further in the nearing future, in taking out of the world which has rejected them also, those whom He has linked with Himself, as in His prayer. Resurrection and ascension will demonstrate as to them also with whom the Father is. In heaven they will be "made the righteousness of God in Him." A marvelous display! but the Lord does not here speak of it. It is of the testimony of the Spirit's presence in the world that He is here speaking.

But what remains, then, for the world itself? Judgment! and already the prince of this world has been judged. We must not understand this to mean that sentence has been executed upon him: which plainly is not the case. It is *pronounced*, but certainly he is not shut up in the abyss as yet (Rev. xx. 1–3); and still less in the lake of fire (ver. 10). Branded with his doom, he yet is suffered, in the wisdom of God, to be still abroad, the subtle tempter or the cruel persecutor of the disciples of Him whom he has, in both characters, assailed before.

The Lord turns to brighter themes: emphasizing once again that it is the Spirit of truth that is to come to them, to guide them into what as yet they could not bear:—in fact, into the whole range of truth, and to lead out into the blessed future. In all this the glory of the Son would be revealed: for all things that the Father hath being His, there remains nothing beyond this of which to speak. As Paul says by the illumination of the Spirit now, "All things were created by Him and for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist" (Col. i. 16, 17). Let us remember with adoring hearts, that we are "heirs of God and joint-heirs of Christ;" and let us seek to enter into the amazing grace of such a revelation with all the energy that the Spirit can give.

4. The Lord again speaks of His departure, in terms which His previous words might have enabled them to understand. He was indeed going to the Father; yet by the coming of the Spirit He would, as it were, again be with them: for, as He had said, in that day they would know as they had never known, that He was in the Father, and they in Him, and He in them. But

joy. A woman, when she is in travail, hath sorrow, because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will [v]see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy [w]no man taketh from you.

5 (23-27): Results in access to God.

5. And in [z]that day ye shall ask * me nothing; verily, verily, I say unto you, [y]Whatsoever, ye shall ask † the Father in‡ my name, he will give it you. Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name: ask and ye shall receive, that your [z]joy may be full. These things have I spoken unto you in [a]allegories: [but] the hour is coming when I will no more speak unto you in allegories, but will declare unto you [b]openly about the Father. In that day ye shall ask† in my name: and I say not unto you that I will ask* the Father for you: for the Father himself [c]loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have [d]believed that I came out from the Father.

SECTION 6. (Vers. 28-33.)

A note of victory.

I [e]CAME out from the Father, and am [f]come into the world: again I [g]leave the world and [h]go to the Father.

* ἐρωτάω. † αἰτέω.

‡ This clause is by many put at the end of the sentence.

v *cf.* ver. 16. *cf.* ch. 20. 19, 20.
w *cf.* ch. 14. 27. *cf.* 2 Cor. 6. 10.
x *cf.* ver. 30. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 20 with ver. 13.
y ch. 14. 13. ch. 15. 16. *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 14.
z ch. 15. 11. ch. 17. 13. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 8.
a *cf.* ch. 10. 6. *cf.* Matt. 13. 11, 12.
b *cf.* ch. 20. 17. *cf.* 2 Cor. 3. 12-18. *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 8.
c *cf.* ch. 14. 21, 23. *cf.* ch. 17. 26.
d *cf.* ch. 6. 69. *cf.* ver. 30. ch. 17. 8.
e *cf.* ch. 8. 14, 42.
f *cf.* ch. 1. 9-11.
g *cf.* ch. 12. 35.
h *cf.* ch. 17. 13.

His words only show them lost in the mysterious sorrow of His departure,—the departure again of Him who had come into the world to bring in the long-expected blessing, and was going back with His end, as it seemed, unachieved, to leave them with their failed hopes! The present sorrow was too heavy upon them for the hope beyond to be realized as yet. The sorrow was plain; the hope was a perplexity.

5. But the Lord goes on to the results Godward of the new place He was about to take, and again declares the value of His Name in access to the Father. It was not to be as if He stood between, and they must come to Him, that He might go to the Father for them. No, He had opened the way for direct approach. Moreover the Father Himself loved them for the love they had to Him whom they had received as come out from the Father. Let them prove for themselves the sweetness of this way of access, that they might realize the fulness of joy resulting from so wonderful a place of intimacy as would now be theirs. For as yet they had asked nothing in His Name: they had not learned to identify themselves with Him who as yet had not taken His place for them with God. But the sanctuary now stood open, the allegories in which He had hitherto spoken to them were to be exchanged for open speech that suited this. There was now to be in the nearest place with God a Man in heaven. Henceforth there is for men an entrance into that within the veil, whither the Forerunner has entered for us.

Sec. 6.

A brief note of triumph closes His speech with the disciples. He repeats finally that, having come from the Father into the world, He now goes back from the world to the Father. It might seem as if He was returning with His great purpose unaccomplished, and with regard to Israel, it was in some sense really so: "I have labored in vain, and spent My strength for nought," is His own complaint through the prophet (Isa. xlix. 4): yet, He adds, "Surely My

His disciples say unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no allegory. Now we [i]know that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any shouldst ask* thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God. Jesus answered them, [j]Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is come, that ye shall be [k]scattered every one to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am [l]not alone, because the Father is with me. These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye may have [m]peace. In the [n]world ye [shall] have tribulation, but be of good courage: I have [o]overcome the world.

i *ctr.* ch. 14. 5, 8.
j *cf.* ch. 13. 38.
k *cf.* Matt. 26. 31. *cf.* Mk. 14. 50. *cf.* ch. 20. 10.
l *cf.* ch. 8. 16, 29. *ctr.* Mk. 15. 34.
m ch. 14. 27.
n *cf.* ch. 15. 18–21. *cf.* Acts 14. 22. *cf.* Rom. 5. 3–5.
o *cf.* ch. 14. 30. *cf.* Heb. 12. 2. *cf.* Rev. 3. 21. *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 5. *cf.* Rom. 8. 37–39.

SECTION 7. (Chap. xvii.)

The Melchizedek Priest: His work anticipatively completed.

1 (1-5): Authority over all flesh, to give eternal life.

1. THESE words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the [p]hour is come: [q]glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may [r]glorify thee; as thou

p *cf.* ch. 7. 6, 30.

* ἐρωτάω.

q *cf.* ch. 12. 23. q *cf.* ch. 12. 28; *cf.* ch. 13. 31, 32; *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 21. r *cf.* Phil. 2. 11; *cf.* ver. 4.

judgment is with the Lord, and My work with My God." The answer accordingly comes from God to Him: and we know how that Cross which was then the symbol of His rejection has become the symbol of a wider and higher triumph. New purposes were to be disclosed: mysteries hidden in God through all the former ages were to reveal the unsuspected wonder of His work, and fill heaven as well as earth with the display in them of the divine glory. The Lord is full, as we are permitted to see when He turns presently to His Father, with the light beyond the gloom; but the disciples are not ready for the communication of it to them. For a moment, indeed, a gleam seems to have pierced the darkness. As He speaks of going to the Father, they have got already, they say, beyond the allegories into the plain speech they longed for and of which He had spoken. But even in the words in which they say this, they show how far the gloom had shrouded them. "*Now we know*," they say, "that Thou knowest all things:—*by this we believe that Thou camest forth from God.*" Patiently and sadly He replies to this: "*Do* ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is come, that ye shall be scattered every one to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet," He adds, "I am not alone, but My Father is with Me." Amid all, He knows that the victory is sure: and sure for *them*: "These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good courage: I have overcome the world."

Sec. 7.

His discourse with them is ended, and He turns now to the Father, to put into His hand these poor and presently to be scattered sheep, of whom He is going to show Himself, in the very hour of their scattering, more than ever the good Shepherd. It is the Melchizedek, or Royal, Priest however, to whom we are privileged to listen in His intercession for His people, the work being anticipated as done, that puts Him in the place. We have seen this character attaching to much that He says, in all this part of John, as very largely to the doctrine of the Gospel as a whole. In this closing portion, we have seen Him at the commencement in the place of Advocate, or rather what connects with this, and which involves the same position as the Risen and Ascended Man in which we find Him here. So it is said,—"knowing that the Father had put all things into His hands;"—that is really His Kingship: He is Lord of all.

There is, of course, a special form of His Kingdom which He takes for a special purpose, when as Son of man He brings the earth from its disorder back to

hast given unto him [s]authority over all flesh, that as to all that thou hast [t]given him, he might give them life eternal. And this is the [u]life eternal, that they should [v]know thee, the only true God, and [w]Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have [x]glorified thee upon the earth: I have [y]finished the work which thou hadst given me to do. And now, O Father, [z]glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory that I had with thee [a]before the world was.

[s] *cf.* ch. 3. 35. *cf.* ch. 5. 27. *cf.* Matt. 28. 18.
[t] vers. 6, 9, 24. *cf.* ch. 6. 37, 39. *cf.* Heb. 2. 13.
[u] *cf.* ch. 3. 14–16. *cf.* ch. 10. 28, 29.

cf. 1 Jno. 5. 11, 12. [v] *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 13; *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 7, 8; *cf.* Gal. 4. 9. [w] *cf.* ch. 6. 29; *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 14. [x] ch. 13. 31; *cf.* ch. 8. 29. [y] *cf.* ch. 13. 1; *cf.* ch. 4. 34; *cf.* ch. 19. 30. [z] *cf.* Rom. 6. 4; *cf.* Acts 3. 13. [a] ver. 26; *cf.* Prov. 8. 22–30; *cf.* Phil. 2. 6; *cf.* Col. 1. 15; *cf.* Heb. 1. 3.

God. Into man's hand it was put at the beginning, and by man's fall it was corrupted and ruined. By man's hand that ruin must be repaired: and thus that Kingdom is the Kingdom of the Son of man: but He is King already before this comes, sitting on the Father's throne, and we are "translated into the Kingdom of the Son of His love."

The Melchizedek Priesthood is supposed by some to contemplate simply the millennial kingdom;—that is, in its exercise; but the bread and wine of our Melchizedek should lead us into a wider application of the type. Indeed, as a type,—in which way alone we must view the application made of Gen. xiv.,—the whole action and the circumstances speak more distinctly of our blessing as Christians than they do of any other. For Sodom is not judged, and Abraham with his typical heavenly calling we may claim without hesitation as our representative: "Abram the Hebrew," (the "passenger,")—passing through a world by which he will not be enriched, "from a thread even to a shoe-latchet." No doubt, there is a right application to millennial times: and the Lord will be seen and will act in that character in relation to Israel and the earth. This is quite true: while it is clear that the argument of the epistle to the Hebrews shows us Christ after the order of Melchizedek *now*, though the type in relation to the "shadow of heavenly things" in the tabernacle brings before us necessarily the type of Aaron.

The relation to what we have in Hebrews is clear in the position taken by the Lord in the prayer He utters. We see Him in the first place with authority given Him over all flesh; then, as not praying for the world: that is, "separate from sinners." Lastly, He is shown as "higher than the heavens,"—in the glory given Him, to which (though a glory always His own) it is as Man He goes back. The mingling of blessing and prayer is quite characteristic. The Royal (and more than royal) Priest is manifest throughout.

1. The Lord's heart is free; He is no longer hindered by the unbelief of those about Him, nor occupied with them, but for them with God. He speaks as the Son of the Father, who has fulfilled the mission upon which He came, and is going back, to take the place belonging to Him,—to the glory which He had before; yet still as Man, to take it from His Father's hand, and to carry through in power what He had begun in suffering. He speaks in the consciousness and communion of the coequal Son, yet in entire devotion to the Father's glory:—"Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee." Authority over all flesh is His; but it is His Father's gift, as His people are. He has ability to sustain what requires no less than divine power, and He gives eternal life,—a divine gift; but the power He uses is in obedience, and everywhere the mystery of His Person manifests itself in His utterances. He is God Himself, in the creature's place to make good the failure of the creature, and by His condescending love to win him from his ruinous path of self-will back to Himself. Who could henceforth refuse a path in which he saw before him the Son of God,—"Leader and Finisher of faith" in its whole course?

But it was His also to give to them eternal life,—a nature to receive and de-

2 (6-21): His prayer not for the world, but for His own.
1 (6-10): The Father's gift.

2. [1] I have [b]manifested thy name unto the men whom thou [c]gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them unto me, and they have kept thy word. Now they [d]know that all things that thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the [e]words that thou hast given me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I [f]came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray with regard to them; I pray [g]not regarding the world, but regarding those whom thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all things that are [h]mine are thine, and all [i]thine are mine, and I am [j]glorified in them.

b *cf.* ch.1.18. *cf.* ch. 14.9-11. ver. 26.
c vers. 2, 9.
d *cf.* ch. 16. 30.
e *cf.* ch.3.34. *cf.* ch.8. 28. *cf.*ch.15.15. ver. 14.
f ch. 16. 28.
g *cf.*ch.14.22 with ch.15. 19. *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 19. ver. 25.
h *cf.* ch. 10. 29, 30.
i ch. 16. 15. j *cf.* 2 Thess. 1. 10; *cf.* Eph. 2. 7.

light in the revelation made. For "this," He says, "is eternal life, that they should know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." This is not a definition absolutely of eternal life, but how it is known and realized, now that Christ is come. The Lord's words necessarily look on, not back; to make them rule out the possibility of eternal life in an Old Testament saint, because he could not say, "Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent," would be a very unwarranted deduction.

2. [1] Marked out by these characters, as He tells us distinctly His disciples were, (for He had made known to them the Father's Name, and they had received His words, and knew surely that He had come out from the Father,) He now presents them to the Father. As the Priest with God, He is the Intercessor for His own, and not for the world,—"separate from sinners," as we read in Hebrews. The priest supposes established relationship with those for whom he stands before God, although with Israel under the law all was but a shadow of the true. Our Priest goes into heaven in the value of an offering once offered, never to be repeated, by which He has "perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

"The only true God," whom Israel knew in contrast with the false gods of the heathen, was nevertheless, as such, in His innermost reality unknown. And this the veil of the sanctuary shutting men out from Him declared. Even by Moses His Face could not be seen. Thus the Lord speaks of "Thy Name which Thou hast given Me." It was His work to declare that Name; and He declares it as a name of relationship to Himself. The Son speaks of the Father: yet God had been spoken of as such before. Nay, He had, as we know, proclaimed Himself a Father to Israel; and we have heard the Jews boldly venturing upon it: "We be not born of fornication," they had said to Jesus Himself; "we have one Father, even God." But they were pushed into saying so: if you had asked them for the Name of Israel's God, you would have heard of Jehovah, or the Lord Almighty, but it is not likely that "the Father" would have leaped to any body's lips. Alas, Israel was no child by nature to such a Father; and God could be no right Father to such a child. On the lips of the Divine Son, sent in servant-form into the world for man's necessity, how different does it become!

It is an eternal relationship, not one of time. It is not relation contracted for a purpose, however blessed may be the purpose. It belongs to His eternity. Love has in Him an Object worthy of itself. Could it be imagined away without a loss so great as to be disastrous?

Think, then, of this, the Son of His bosom, here in the world, a world which He created, at His own personal cost to put away the evil, and bring those who had wandered from Him back to God! This as the manifestation to men of Him who could give His Son for such a purpose, and to be the Head of a new creation built up out of the old, the assurance to it of fullest and abiding blessing!

2 (11-16): Not of the world, and to be kept from the evil.

2 And I am no longer in the world, and these are in the [k]world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, [l]keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be [m]one as we. While I was with them, [n]I kept them in thy name which thou hast given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them hath perished but the [o]son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my [p]joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them thy word, and the world hath [q]hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldst [r]take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the [s]evil. They are [t]not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

k *cf.* ch.13.1. *cf.*1 Pet.5.8.
l ver. 15. *cf.*1 Pet.1.5. *cf.*Jude.24.
m vers. 21, 22. *cf.*ch.10.16. *cfr.*1 Cor.1. 10-13.
n *cf.* Lk. 22. 35, 36. *cf.*Lk.12.22 -38.
o *cf.*ch.6.70, 71. *cf.* Acts 1. 25. *cf.*2 Thess. 2. 3.
p ch. 15. 11.
q ch. 15. 18, 19. *cf.* Jas. 4. 4.
r *cf.* 1 Cor. 5. 10; *cf.* 1 Cor. 7. 20; *cf.* Gal. 1. 4.
s *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 18, 19; *cf.* Lk. 11. 4.
t ver. 14; ch. 8. 23; *cf.* ch. 18. 36; *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 11; *cf.* Heb. 13. 14.

Thus has He manifested to us the Father's Name; but He has done more even than this,—He has given us a place with Him as children, in the value of a life communicated to us, as those of whom thus He, taking as Man the First-born place among them, is not ashamed!

No wonder, therefore, that the authority given Him over all flesh should be for this as the fundamental and decisive exercise of it, to give eternal life to as many as are given to Him; thus of necessity separated from the world which has rejected Him. How dear are they to Him as the Father's gift! how dear as those of whom His grace can say, forgetting all that could be pleaded, however rightly, against them, 'They have kept Thy word!" He has taken fullest care that they should know, in all that He can speak of as His own, the Father as the Source of all. For He has given them but the words given Him, and in receiving them they know Him as the One come out from Him—the Sent One of God.

Here then are those with regard to whom He prays: the Father's own, the fruit of the Father's mission of the Son; those given Him of the Father and still the Father's; even as in the perfect communion of that relationship all things are. In these also, the fruit of His own work, He is glorified.

2 Now He was no longer to be in the world, but they would be left in it, without that gracious, all-sufficient companionship which they had been enjoying. He commits them, therefore, to the care of that Divine Father, under whose guidance and government the children of God still walk (1 Pet. i. 17); He abiding as the Lord who directs their service (Eph. iv. 5, 6; 1 Cor. xii. 5). For all things are in His hands, to work out in power, as has been said, what He has in suffering laid the foundation for; but the relation of the Father to the children is as plainly to be recognized. He prays, therefore, to the *Holy* Father, to keep them in the power of that Name which He has manifested to them. The power of it would be to keep them near to Him: for the sanctuary of His Presence is the only refuge from self and sin. At a distance from the Light, evil and good become soon merged and indistinguishable. With Christ the atmosphere in which He lived was God, and into it He brought all others:—"While I was with them, I kept them in Thy Name, which Thou hast given Me." Alas, there was one who was repelled by it: "I have guarded them, and not one of them has perished but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled."

He was going to God, but would leave them, not in sorrow, but in joy. "The joy of the Lord is strength;" and He had spoken to them as He had, that they might have that joy which had been His own, in the midst of a scene of sorrow such as the world would all the more be; for in proportion as they had

3 (17-21): He sanctifying Himself, that they may be sanctified.

3 Sanctify them by the [u]truth: thy [v]word is truth. As thou hast [w]sent me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And in their behalf I [x]sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. Neither do I pray with regard to [y]these alone; but also regarding those believing on me through their word; that they all may be [z]one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one* in us: that the [a]world may believe that thou hast sent me.

* Some omit "one."

u *cf.* ch. 8. 32. *cf.* 2 Thess. 2. 13. *cf.* Eph. 4. 24.
v *cf.* Eph. 1. 13 with Eph. 5. 26. *cf.* Ps. 119. 160.
w ch. 20. 21.
x *cf.* ch. 10. 36. *cf.* Heb. 7. 26.
y *cf.* Acts 2. 39; *cf.* Rom. 9. 23, 24.
z *cf.* ch. 10. 16; *cf.* Eph. 2. 13-19; ver. 11.
a *cf.* ch. 13. 35; *cf.* Acts 5. 12-14; *ctr.* Rom. 2. 24.

their joy in God, would it be realized how far it was away from Him, and it would hate them as not of it. The light would bring its shadows, and they would be identified with Himself in sorrow and in joy alike. Yet He did not pray that they should be taken out of the world: the wilderness would have for them its harvests, to be reaped through all eternity. How Israel's feast of tabernacles tells of that! He prayed only that they might be kept out of the evil in it. From the world itself He had entirely separated His own; they belonged to it, in the appointment of God and in the nature He had given them (inconsistent as they might be with this) no more than did He Himself.

3 The truth was to be the means of sanctification to them,—"*Thy* truth," He says, that is, the truth as characterized by that revelation of the Father of which He has been speaking. Now, sending them into the world, as He was doing, the open glory of heaven into which He had introduced them was to be henceforth characterized by a new Object in it,—a Man, set apart there to God (as "sanctified" means),—sanctified by Himself, as none other ever was, to be for Him His image in human form (2 Cor. iv. 4). Divine glory shining out in the face of Jesus.

We have here another instance of the foundation of Paul's doctrine being in this Gospel. The "gospel of the glory of Christ" was that by which the apostle of the Gentiles was turned to God, and this was the light in which he henceforth walked. Christ in glory was the power over him, the joy within him. Here was his eye fixed; here was the goal of his course, which in his ardor was a *race*. The passion of his soul was to "win Christ, and to be found in Him." And he states but his experimental knowledge of the Lord's words here when he says that "Christ is made unto us wisdom from God, even . . . *sanctification*" (1 Cor. i. 30). The Object before him detached him from the world, and drew him heavenward. It absorbed and inspired him. Generalizing his experience, he affirms for Christians at large the result as he had realized it: "We all, beholding the glory of the Lord with open face,"—it is the *Lord's* face that is "open," or without a veil,—"are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit" (2 Cor. iii. 18).

This is an inspired comment upon the words before us in the Gospel. We shall find them developed for us by the apostle in various ways, which at present we shall not attempt to follow. Every Christian heart should know for itself this central glory of the gospel, in which God and Man meet, and meet for ever; in which Christ gone in to God, with His work achieved, our Forerunner, invites us to abide where He abides. Who shall deny Him what His soul has wrought for?—or refuse to go in out of the night, where there is no night more?

Where this light falls, it is *glory*: "from glory to glory," says the apostle. The least degree is that; and where it shines it brightens to the endless day. "That they may be sanctified in truth," says the Lord; and the touch of these rays is the dispelling of all illusion. What is the world? it ignored, insulted, crucified *Him!*—a world in which He could serve, but not reign! and yet even the life here is lifted into glory, when we can say, "The life which I live

3 (22-26): Manifested glory.

3. And the [b]glory which thou hast given me I have given them; that they may be [c]one, as we are one; I [d]in them and [e]thou in me, that they may be [f]perfected into one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast [g]loved them as thou hast loved me.

Father, as for those* whom thou hast given me, I desire that where I am they also may be [h]with me; that they may [i]behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou [j]lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

O [k]righteous Father, the [l]world hath not known thee, but [m]I have known thee, and [n]these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have [o]made known to them thy name, and [p]will make it known; that the [q]love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and [r]I in them.

b *cf.* Rom. 8. 17, 30. *cf.* Eph. 2. 6, 7. *cf.* Phil. 3. 21.
c *cf.* vers. 11, 21.
d ver. 26. *cf.* Rom. 8. 10. *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 16.
e *cf.* ch. 14. 10, 11.
f *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 12. *cf.* Eph. 4. 15, 16.
g ch. 16. 27. *cf.* ch. 14. 21, 23.
h ch. 14. 3. *cf.* 1 Thess. 4. 17. *cf.* 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12.

* Many read, "that which."

i cf. 1 Jno. 3. 2; *cf.* Rev. 22. 4; *cf.* Tit. 2. 13. *j cf.* ver. 5; *cf.* Prov. 8. 30; *cf.* ch. 1. 18. *k cf.* ver. 11; *cf.* Rev. 16. 5. *l* ch. 15. 21; *cf.* ch. 1. 10; *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 21. *m* ch. 8. 55; *cf.* ch. 10. 14, 15. *n* ch. 16. 27-30; ver. 8. *o* ver. 6; *cf.* ch. 14. 9. *p cf.* ch. 20. 17; *cf.* Rom. 8. 15; *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 13. *q* ch. 15. 9; ch. 16. 27. *r cf.* Eph. 3. 17.

in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

And here the Lord explicitly assures us of our interest in all this: "Neither pray I regarding these alone, but also regarding those believing on Me through their word; that they may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me."

This is a unity of practical life, oneness of heart and mind, such as subsists between the Father and the Son: a unity which the world is to be able to see, so as to be led by it to faith. It is not, of course, that the world as a whole will believe, but men of the world have been at all times wrought upon by it. It is not the Church that is meant,—in John we have not this; although, no doubt, every breach of Church unity has begun as a breach in the practical life. The life has its character from the truth entered into; and "one in Us" shows it to be a life of fellowship with the Father and the Son. How glorious such a witness! What a testimony to Him who can work it in such as we are!

3. The prayer now passes into blessing pronounced,—the expression of His will with regard to His own, and in which He goes beyond the time of His absence to that in which His glory will be openly revealed. The change is suited to this, and to the Melchizedek character as well; though we have no reason to limit this to the time of open manifestation.

The glory given us we shall be seen in together when the Lord appears, and it will be the glory in which He will appear as Son of man. Then the world therefore will *know*,—it will be no question of faith any longer, but of sight,—that Jesus was sent of the Father. In that day He will come "in His own glory, and that of His Father, and of the holy angels" (Luke ix. 26).

But it is not said, "in the glory of His saints," although they have glory; and the reason is here apparent, that it is in His glory they will come. His is the glory which they reflect, and so the Lord says, "I in them," and the apostle, that "He cometh to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, . . . in that day" (2 Thess. i. 10). The glory will be seen to be His, but they will share it; and being thus "perfected into one,"—in a unity of glory such as shall be worthy of Him, the world shall know, He says. "that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me." Words these are indeed, which none but Himself would have dared to use;

DIVISION 3. (Chaps. xviii.–xxi.)

The Perfected Offering and the Resurrection of the Life.

SUBDIVISION 1. (Chaps. xviii.–xix. 16.)

Sovereign Lord and Willing Offering.

SECTION 1. (Chap. xviii. 1-11.)

Obedient to the Father's will.

WHEN Jesus had said these things, he [s]went forth with his disciples beyond the torrent Kedron, where was a [t]garden, into which he entered and his disciples. And Judas also, who delivered him up, knew the place, for Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with his disciples. Judas, therefore, having received the [u]troop and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

[s] Matt. 26. 30, 36. Mk. 14. 26, 32. Lk. 22. 39.
[t] *cf.* Gen. 2. 8. *cf.* ch. 19. 41.
[u] Matt. 26. 47. Mk. 14. 43. Lk. 22. 47.

but we stand before God in the value of what He is: grace finding in this way its ability to manifest itself so as to bring out all the depths of His nature. He is going "in the ages to come" to show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 7). Need we say of anything, it is too great to show forth this?

But there is a glory His which is greater than that in which He is to be seen with His people, and which can only be seen in His own eternal dwelling-place; therefore He desires that we may be with Him, to behold it there. It is glory which as Man He enters, and in that sense "given" glory, and yet as the recognition of the love which was eternally His. Thus it is Divine glory, as far as the creature can be strengthened to behold it. There are necessary limits here,—limits which forbid even our defining them further. And the whole of what we have here is of a nature which requires rather prayer than study to apprehend it. We must be where He is, to realize the vision.

The Lord appeals now to the "*Righteous* Father," as One who, in the midst of a world "alienated from the knowledge of Him," has known Him; and He links His disciples, spite of their feebleness, with Himself, as those who at least have known Him as sent of the Father. To them He had made known His Name, and would go on to make it known; for (they and we) must here be learners still. The love of the Father to the Son is, as we have seen, part of that manifestation; and so this becomes an inward realization in the soul; and He, the Object of the Father's love, in whom therefore the Divine nature in its glory revealed itself,—He becomes in them the necessary Object also, and the One in whom fellowship with God is henceforth found.

DIV. 3.

We have reached now the third division of the Gospel, in which we see the perfected offering, and that resurrection from the dead which is its manifest acceptance. John gives, as has been already said, the burnt-offering aspect of the Lord's work, which would alone suit the view of His Person as the Only-begotten of the Father. "Lo, I come to do Thy will" is here the characteristic; and as the Mighty Worker He carries it to completion. As the free-will sacrifice He freely lays down His life. Throughout it reads like a triumphal progress. There is no agony in the Garden, no cloud upon the Cross. He testifies Himself that the work is finished; and this is confirmed by the threefold witness of the Spirit, the water, and the blood. The resurrection of the Lord is, as we might expect, more fully opened up in its consequences for us than in the other Gospels.

SUBD. 1.

In the first subdivision His sovereignty is shown over all circumstances, which makes Him, therefore, the free and willing Offering that He is. There

Jesus, therefore, [v]knowing all things that were coming upon him, went forth and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus the Nazarene. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And [w]Judas also, who delivered him up, stood with them. As soon then as he said unto them, I am he, they went backward and [x]fell to the ground. Again therefore he asked them, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus the Nazarene. Jesus answered them, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, [y]let these go their way: that the saying of Jesus might be [z]fulfilled, As for those whom thou hast given me, I have not lost one of them. Simon Peter, therefore, having a [a]sword, drew it, and smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear: and the servant's name was Malchus. Jesus therefore said unto Peter, [b]Put up the sword into the sheath: the [c]cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

v cf. ch. 13. 1, 3.

w ver. 7. *cfr.* ch. 1. 38. *cfr.* ch. 20. 15.

x cf. Matt. 26. 53. *cf.* ch. 10. 18.

y cf. ch. 10. 28.

z ch. 17. 12.

a cf. Matt. 26. 51, 52. Mk. 14. 47. *cf.* Lk. 22. 35–38, 50, 51.

b cf. ver. 36.

c Matt. 27. 39, 42.

is the complete fulfillment of His own words: "No man taketh My life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself; I have authority to lay it down, and authority to take it again; this commandment have I received of My Father." How perfectly the freedom and the constraint unite together here!

Sec. 1.

The first section beautifully exhibits both characters. He goes over the "black" winter-torrent Kedron, so significant of the "brook in the way" of which He had to drink, in order that He might with His work accomplished "lift up the head." For the refreshment that He procured for others was that which was His own; and it broke out of the dark abyss of suffering which was now before Him. Over Kedron, then, He passes to the garden, carrying with Him His disciples; He was carrying them indeed, though by a way they knew not, to the paradise of God.

But He is clearly going forward with perfect knowledge of all, on His own part: Judas, we are significantly told here, knew the place as one of frequent resort by the Lord with His disciples. He is not shunning but seeking now the "oil-press" of sorrow. Eternal joy is to be the sure result.

How pitiful, in view of this, the array mustered to take the One who comes forward to meet it! "Whom seek ye?" He asks; and when He tells them, He is the One they are seeking, as if fulfilling the divine decree as to that supreme Name of Jesus, they all go backward and fall to the ground. Then, being warned, He gives them leave, if still they will, to take Him; but with the stipulation (blessed Shepherd of the sheep!) that they must let His followers go. And they let them go! even though Peter, out of harmony with His Lord's mind as so frequently he is, uses his sword against them! What of them all? Alas, the poor tools of their own enemy! will He contend with souls that He has made? No, all is settled for Him entirely apart from any thought of them or of their master: He does not speak in John of the twelve legions of angels ready to take the place of the twelve,—twelve now no more!—who are soon to forsake Him. The Son is in the presence of the Father only; and "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" is His unanswerable, all-sufficient argument.

Sec. 2.

They bind Him who is bound already, the meek Lamb of sacrifice; and now we have a scene how different in the high priest's court. The questioning before Annas is only given by John; who on the other hand does not relate, though he

SECTION 2. (Chap. xviii. 12–27.)
The deceit of an enemy and the denial of a friend.

THE troop, therefore, and the captain, and the officers of the Jews, took Jesus and [d] bound him. And they led him away to Annas first: for he was [e] father-in-law to Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. Now it was Caiaphas who gave [f] counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. And Simon Peter [g] followed Jesus, also [h] another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the court of the high priest; but Peter stood at the door without. Then went out the other disciple who was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. The [i] maid-servant, therefore, that kept the door, saith unto Peter, Art thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. And the servants and officers were standing there, having made a [j] fire of coals, for it was cold; and they were warming themselves; and Peter stood [k] with them and warmed himself. The high priest therefore asked Jesus about his disciples and about his doctrine. Jesus answered him, I have spoken [l] openly to the world; I taught always in the synagogue and in the temple, where all the Jews come together, and in [m] secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask those who have heard, what I have spoken unto them; behold, [n] they know what I have said. And as he said these things, one of the officers that stood by struck Jesus on the [o] face, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear [p] witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me? Annas therefore sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

[d] *cf.* Gen. 22. 9.
[e] *cf.* Matt. 26. 57. ver. 24. *cf.* Acts 4. 6.
[f] ch. 11. 49–53.
[g] Matt. 26. 58. Mk. 14. 54. Lk. 22. 54.
[h] *cf.* ch. 13. 23. *cf.* ch. 20. 2–4. *cf.* ch. 21. 20.
[i] *cf.* Acts 12. 13.
[j] ver. 25. *cfr.* Heb. 11. 25. *cfr.* 2 Tim. 2. 3, 4.
[k] *cf.* 2 Cor. 6. 14–17. *cf.* Prov. 13. 20.
[l] Matt. 26. 55. Lk. 4. 15. ch. 7. 26.
[m] *cf.* Is 48. 16. *cf.* Matt. 13. 10–17.
[n] *cf.* ch. 7. 28, 46. *cf.* Matt. 26. 59, etc.
[o] Matt. 26. 67. ch. 19. 3. *cf.* Is. 50. 6.
[p] *cfr.* Acts 23. 1–3.

implies, the trial before Caiaphas. As father-in-law of the latter, and one who had been at a former time, high priest himself, he may have been, as Lange suggests, regarded by the Jews as still the true one; his relationship to the present one giving him his opportunity also to affect a position which he could not openly take. The Romans set up one after another as it pleased them,—a thing rightly enough offensive to the upholders of the law, and which seems to appear as this in the remark twice made, that Caiaphas was the high priest *for that year* (ver. 13; chap. xi. 49). The two seem to have occupied even the same house. Caiaphas, we are reminded, was the man who had given counsel to the Jews as to the expediency of one man dying for the people, which God overruled to be a prophecy of a Saviour, but which showed him as a judge prepared with his verdict. Annas is as much allied to him in spirit as in flesh. His whole aim here is to ensnare the Lord with questions as to His disciples and His doctrine, for which Christ refers him to what He had taught everywhere with the greatest publicity. It was for His accusers to make their charges, and prove them against Him. To the one who smites Him for want of reverence for the high priest He only replies with a quiet remonstrance.

Annas is baffled, though not turned from his malignity, and sends Him bound to Caiaphas; of the trial before whom the evangelist takes no further notice. It was a trial scarcely in form, and, as we have seen, decided before it was commenced. It is left a blank, as in fact was that of Annas.

But Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. They said, therefore, unto him, Art thou also one of his disciples? He [q]denied and said, I am not. One of the servants of the high priest, being a kinsman of him whose [r]ear Peter had cut off, saith, Did I not see thee in the garden with him? Peter then denied again: and immediately a [s]cock crew.

[q] ver. 17.
[r] ver. 10.
[s] ch. 13. 38. Matt. 26.69-75. Mk. 14. 66-72. Lk. 22. 55-62.

SECTION 3. (Chaps. xviii. 28-xix. 16.)

Hearts made manifest.

1 (xviii. 28-32): The word of Jesus governing.

1. THEY lead, therefore, Jesus from Caiaphas into the [t]prætorium: and it was early: and they themselves went not into the prætorium, that they might not be [u]defiled, but might eat the passover. Pilate, therefore, went out unto them, and said, What [v]accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, If this man were not a [w]malefactor, we would not have delivered him up to thee. Pilate, therefore, said unto them, Take ye him and judge him according to [x]your law. The Jews said unto him, It is not [y]permitted us to put any one to death; that the [z]word of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he was going to die.

[t] Matt. 27.2, etc. Mk. 15. 1, etc. Lk. 23. 1, etc.
[u] *cf.* ch. 11. 55. *cf.* Acts 11. 3. *ctr.* Deut. 21. 7.
[v] *cf.* ch. 19. 7.
[w] *ctr.* ver. 38.
[x] *ctr.* Rom. 3. 21.
[y] *ctr.* ch. 10. 31. *ctr.* Acts 7. 59.
[z] *cf.* ch. 12. 32, 33. *cf.* Gal. 3. 13. *cf.* Matt. 20. 19.

With Peter's denial we are sadly familiar, and John appears to add nothing to it; but he himself, though unnamed, surprises us with the quiet boldness of faith and love which carry him through untouched and unquestioned, where the apparently bolder disciple breaks down so helplessly. He is known to the high priest, and to the keeper of the gate, and known as a follower of Christ too, as her question to Peter shows, "Art *thou also* one of this man's disciples?" Afterwards we shall find him in the same open way with the mother of Jesus at the cross, and obtaining a precious recognition, and a precious charge, from the dying Saviour: and through all he is untouched and unquestioned. Blessed it is to see him who speaks so of love an example of it: unquestioned by men, he is unquestioned also by the Lord: there is plainly no need of it; and happy is he who is in such a case. Let us seek for nearer acquaintance, and we shall be truer to Him; here is the soil in which faith rooting itself will grow vigorously. Let us get nearer to His heart, that we may be qualified to walk evenly and undisturbed through the world's allurements and its threats alike, armed against each by the secrets learned there.

Sec. 3.

1. In the third section the Lord answers for Himself before Pilate; and this is proportionately much dwelt upon, and particulars given which we do not find elsewhere. It is evident that what we are shown is the searching out of the Roman's conscience in the light of the Presence before which he stands. Judge and accused change places; and, hard as the governor may be,—a man stained with many crimes, he yet compares favorably with Israel's leaders, blinded and darkened with the light they have shut out. That Pilate shrank, though vainly, from what the insane fury of the Jews forced upon him is plain in all the Gospels; but John shows us the under-workings of a convicted soul, as no other does, and the Lord's compassionate faithfulness towards the miserable victim of his own self-treachery. Hearts are made manifest all through, and the Light shines upon all the clouds that would obscure it. Even the refusal of the people to take the matter into their own hands, when Pilate would put it in them, only works, as is noted, for the fulfillment of the word of Jesus. Crucifixion was not a Jewish punishment. The "hanging upon a tree" was with them

2 (xviii. 33-38): Judgment for the judge.

2. Pilate, therefore, entered again into the prætorium, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the [a]king of the Jews? Jesus answered, Sayest thou this of thyself? or did others say it to thee concerning me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me; what hast thou done? Jesus answered, My kingdom is [b]not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, my servants* would have fought, that I might not have been delivered up to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate said, therefore, unto him, Thou art then a king? Jesus answered, Thou sayest it, for I [c]am a king. For this I have been born, and for this have I come into the world, that I might bear [d]witness to the truth: every one that is [e]of the truth heareth my voice. Pilate saith unto him, [f]What is truth?

3 (xviii. 38-xix. 7): People and judge transformed and manifested.

3. And when he had said this, he went out again unto

* Gk. "officers."

[a] Matt. 27. 11.

[b] *cf.* ch. 17. 16. *cf.* Matt. 4. 8, 9. *cf.* ch. 6. 15. *cf.* Matt. 25. 31, etc.

[c] *cf.* Ps. 45. 1. *cf.* Zech. 9. 9. *cf.* Rev. 19. 16.

[d] *cf.* Rev. 1. 5.

[e] *cf.* ch. 8. 47. *cf.* ch. 10. 26. *cf.* 1 Jno. 4. 6.

[f] *cf.* ver. 37. *cf.* ch. 19. 8. *cf.* 1 Cor. 1. 21, 26.

after death, and not a mode of inflicting this: but with death all was ended for the Lord; and the rich man's sepulcre begins His vindication.

2. Before Pilate the Lord answers at once, when He is questioned, that He is King of the Jews. But He asks, Is this his own question?—has he personal interest in it? Of Messiah he must have heard, and of all the hopes that were connected with it; more surely still, of a reign of righteousness and truth to replace the long oppression, and bring peace at last to a weary, if not sin-weary world. Was the intervention of God anything,—even an alarm perhaps, to one of the world's rulers? But Pilate puts off the question as a mere Jewish one: let him look at how his own case stands as a man accused by his own people; what reason had they? The Lord answers him, but keeps His steady pressure upon the conscience, already uneasy, of the real criminal before Him the real Judge. He lets Pilate know that His Kingdom is not of this world,—has not its origin or nature from the world: else would He not have been left, unarmed and without a struggle, to the merciless hands that had been laid upon Him. Had His followers,—out of all the crowds that had gathered round Him,—been organized into such a force as would be needed for the establishment of a kingdom such as Rome could fear or take into account? His Kingdom plainly was not like one of these.

But then He really was a King? the Roman questioned. And the Lord answers that indeed He is a King: that His birth and coming into the world (and here a gleam of His divine nature flashes out) was to bear witness to the truth. Truth, in a false and hollow world, to establish this was the purpose of His life and mission. By this would He establish also His kingdom over the hearts and minds of men. Truth is one, decisive, imperial: he that would learn it must be subject to it. And here Christ drops a word for the conscience of His hearer, "Every one who is *of* the truth heareth My voice."

Pilate answers like the sceptical Roman that he is, "What *is* truth?" Alas, their Pantheon of captured gods had had bitter fruit in their rough conquerors. They had learned to believe in gods no more, save in him who had overtopped them all, their emperor; and in him the farce was but too transparent. And yet here was a word to get behind even such defences: for, if he knew not what was truth, he could know, at least, whether *he* was "of" it. And, if to be true were needful for such knowledge, was the lack of this, perhaps, what made truth appear such an unattainable thing?

3. Something, at least, makes Pilate uneasy; he stays for no answer, but goes off to the multitude, to declare that he can find no fault with Jesus. His busi-

the Jews, and saith unto them, I find [g] no fault in him. But ye have a custom that I [h] release unto you one at the passover, will ye therefore that I release unto you the king of the Jews? They all* cried out, therefore, again, saying, [i] Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

Then Pilate therefore took Jesus and [j] scourged him. And the soldiers plaited a [k] crown of thorns, and put it upon his head: and put a [l] purple robe on him: and they approached him and said, Hail, [m] king of the Jews! and they [n] smote him on the face. And Pilate went out again and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him out unto you, that ye may know that I find [o] no fault in him. Jesus, therefore, came forth, wearing the crown of thorn and the purple robe. And he saith unto them, [p] Behold the man! When, therefore, the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, saying, [q] Crucify! crucify him! Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him and crucify him; for I find no fault in him. The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he [r] made himself the Son of God.

g *cf.* Matt. 27. 24. Lk. 23. 4. ch. 19. 4.
h Matt. 27 15, etc. Mk. 15. 6, etc. Lk. 23. 17, etc.
i *cf.* Acts 3. 14.
j Matt. 20. 19. Matt.27.26. Mk. 15. 15. Lk. 18. 33. *cf.* Is. 50. 6.
k Matt. 27. 29. Mk. 15. 17. *cf.* Gen. 3. 18. *cf.*Gal.3.10, 13.
l *cf.*Matt.27. 28. *cf.* Ex.26.1.
m *cf.* Ps. 69. 12.
n ch. 18. 22.
o ch. 18. 38. *cf.*Deut.32. 31.
p ver. 14. *cf.* Is. 40. 9.
q Matt. 27. 22.

*Some omit "all."

r ch. 5. 17, 18. *cf.* ch. 10. 30, 33; *cf.* Matt. 26. 33; *cf.* ch. 9. 35

ness was, in that case, only to release Him; but he seeks compromise with his conscience, instead of yielding to it, and, in what seems to him a way of escape from a difficult situation, puts the whole matter into the people's hands. Thus he makes it almost impossible to return to the path of righteousness from which he has departed, and proclaims himself openly as not of the truth.

But the people reveal themselves in a worse fashion still, and do what even a Pilate believes impossible. It is this impossibility upon which he reckons, only to find that he has shut for himself the door of escape which he had hoped to find. They immediately avail themselves of the opportunity to show their preference of a robber and murderer to their own glorious King. We have noticed elsewhere how strangely yet significantly this name Bar-Abbas, "son of the father," comes in here. It was the Son of the Father,—just as that,—whom they were refusing now; but of what father was this lawless one the son? A shadow it is, surely, of their awful apostasy to come, when they will receive him who comes in his own name, true child of the rebel and "murderer from the beginning" of whom the Lord had warned some before, in words which had cut deep into those who heard them, that they were the spiritual children. The works of their father they were indeed now doing.

Pilate, now in their hands, gives up Jesus to be scourged; hoping, however, as it would seem, by this, according to his former proposal (Luke xxiii. 22), to appease the people, that he might then release Him. In every compromise of this sort he only and miserably fails. John does not dwell upon all this: he mentions the scourging, the crown of thorns, the mockery of the purple robe; but these very briefly. By all this, Pilate vainly endeavors to awaken sympathy in behalf of the One whom again, to his own condemnation, he declares to be without fault. We may be sure, from his known character, he would have gladly found what would have justified him in pursuing with good will the course upon which he was now being urged unwillingly. Yet he emphatically reiterates that he finds no fault in Him. Israel it is who bound Him to the death; crying out *what* death,—the most cruel and ignominious one,—they have chosen

4 (xix. 8-11): Impotence of the one who has once yielded.

4. When Pilate, therefore, heard that word, he was the more [s]afraid, and went into the prætorium again, and saith unto Jesus, [t]Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him [u]no answer. Pilate, therefore, saith unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have [v]authority to release thee, and have authority to crucify thee? Jesus answered, Thou wouldst have no authority against me, except it were [w]given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me up to thee hath the [x]greater sin.

5 (xix. 12-16): A self-pronounced, but divine sentence.

5. Upon this Pilate [y]sought to release him; but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: every one that maketh himself a king declareth [z]against Cæsar. When Pilate, therefore, [a]heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down in the judgment-seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in Hebrew Gabbatha. And it was the [b]preparation of the passover: it was about the sixth hour; and he saith unto the Jews, [c]Behold your king! But they cried out, [d]Away, away with him, crucify him! Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered, We have [e]no king but Cæsar. Then [f]delivered he him up therefore to them to be crucified.

s *cf.* Matt. 27. 19. *cf.* Acts 24. 25.
t *cf.* ch. 7. 27-29.
u *cf.* Is. 53. 7.
v *ctr.* 2 Sam. 23. 3.
w *cf.* Rom. 13. 1-7. *cf.* Dan. 2. 21. *cf.* Gen. 31. 29.
x *cf.* ch. 9. 41. *cf.* Matt. 21. 38.
y *cf.* Acts 3. 13. *cf.* Acts 24. 27.
z *cf.* Lk. 23. 2. *cf* ch. 18. 36.
a *cf.* ch. 12. 42, 43. *cf.* Prov. 29. 25.
b ch. 18. 28.
c ver. 5.
d Matt. 27. 22, 23. ver. 6.
e *ctr.* ch. 6. 15. *ctr.* Ps. 45. 1. *cf.* ch. 14. 30.
f *cf.* Acts 2 23. *cf.* Acts 4. 27, 28.

for Him. "Take ye Him and crucify Him," Pilate answers; "for I find no fault in Him." Then they bring out their real accusation: "We have a law, and by our law He ought to die; because He made Himself the Son of God." He must die, because He is what He is, and affirms it. He must die for the grace which has made Him become Man!

4. But Pilate is stricken again by such an accusation: for the legends of heathen superstition are revived at the suggestion, and he remembers, no doubt, that gods and sons of the gods had visited men, according to current beliefs, which he had perhaps too rashly discredited. Did He not carry Himself as if indeed divine? And there were other influences, as the dream of his wife, to make him tremble. He calls Him once more before him, and with an unaccustomed awe upon his spirit, asks Him, "Who art Thou?" He is not a weak man (save as the slave of his own lusts is weak); he is not easily moved to pity; nor is it pity now. He had mingled the blood of the Galileans with their sacrifices, and could have trampled these Jews down now remorselessly, had he not been in hands for the moment stronger than his own. So the Lord plainly and compassionately tells him now. He would have had no authority at all against Him, had it not been given him from above. *God*, (though moved in a way far different from men,) God had delivered Him up; and, alas! the Jew had found in this his opportunity, misconceive it as he might, to pour out the enmity of his heart upon the very One of whom all the ages prophesied, and whom he had been prepared by the voice of heaven's messengers continuously uttered to expect. The Jew had then, indeed, a greater sin than Pilate's: the actual traitor was but the representative of his nation then.

5. Pilate is shaken more than ever by the Lord's words, and again seeks to release Him; but he is not master of himself, and cannot be of others. The Jews know the man, and know their opportunity, and bring to bear upon him an argument that makes him plastic in their hands at once. God is a possibility indeed, but Rome is a certainty, and nearer at hand. "If thou let this Man go," they cry, "thou art not Cæsar's friend; every one that maketh himself a king declareth against Cæsar."

SUBDIVISION 2. (Chap. xix. 16-42.)

Humbling Himself to the cross.

SECTION 1. (Chap. xix. 16-30.)

Obedience perfected.

1 (16-18): Into the kingdom of death.

1. THEY took Jesus, therefore, and led him away; and he went forth, [g] bearing his cross for himself, to the place called the [h] place of a Skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha, where they crucified him; and with him two others, on this side and on that side [one], and Jesus in the [i] midst.

[g] *cf.* Gen. 22. 6. *cf.* Mk. 15. 21, etc.

[h] Lk. 23. 33. *cf.* Rom. 5. 14.

[i] Matt. 27. 38 Mk. 15. 27, 28. *cf.* Lk. 23. 39-43.

"Pilate's playing with the situation," observes Lange, "is now past; now the situation plays with him. First he said—not *asked*,—What is *truth?* Now his frightened heart, to which the emperor's favor is the supreme law of life, says, What is *justice?*" He takes his place on the judgment-seat, therefore, and with what seems something between a taunt and a faint, final plea, says to the Jews, "Behold your King!" But they are only stung to madness: "Away! away with Him!" they cry, "Crucify Him!" "Shall I crucify your King?" he asks again; and now they are made in divine government to pass upon themselves the judgment under which they have ever since been lying: the chief priests answer, "*We have no king but Cæsar.*"

It was not the verdict of the Jews alone, and they have not suffered alone. The whole world has been lying under the yoke which they have preferred to the easy yoke of Christ. They have often got very tired of Cæsar,—true; and, as we see by their fitful movements every now and then, would fain be rid of him. They are always crying, "Give us better government;" but all they can do is, with doubtful betterment, to divide him up into many little Cæsars; better, as they think, because weaker, and with divided interests, so that the balance of power may secure the even weights of justice. That is still an experiment, some think; but this chronic war is never peace, nor can be; and the reason is, men have refused the Prince of peace. Modify it, rename it, disguise it, as you please, the reign of Cæsar is the only alternative.

The struggle on Pilate's part is ended; he consents to the people's verdict; the Lord of life is adjudged to death,—to the death of the Cross.

SUBD. 2.

We have come now to the last step in this unequalled humiliation,—to the death of the Cross. We have seen the character of this in this Gospel to be that of the burnt-offering, which emphasizes on the one side His free obedience, on the other, our acceptance in the value of this. Both these will be found accordingly in what is before us now.

Sec. 1.

The first section shows us then His obedience unto death completed. John's presentation of all this is unique, both in what he gives and in what he omits. Details are little dwelt upon: a few points are brought into prominence, every one of which has its manifest bearing upon the general presentation. The simplicity and depth that everywhere pervade the Gospel are nowhere more conspicuous than they are here.

1. First, He comes, bearing His cross, to Golgotha, the place of a skull,—the place of the kingdom of death. This is plainly what the world is because of sin,—death being the stamp of the government of God upon it. For this the Lord sought it: here His love to men brought Him; only He could lift this burden from them, and for this He must come Himself under it. Those two others whom we well know, to whom death is clearly such a penalty, are on either side of Him, and He in the midst. Penalty it is He is taking; Himself on the division line

2 (19-22): His contested title maintained.

2. And Pilate wrote a [j]title, and put it upon the cross. Now there was written, JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Many of the Jews therefore read this title; for the place where Jesus was crucified was near to the city; and it was [k]written in Hebrew, Roman, Greek. The chief priests, therefore, said unto Pilate, Write not, The king of the Jews, but that *he* [l]*said*, I am king of the Jews. Pilate answered, [m]What I have written I have written.

3 (23, 24): Exposed and displayed.

3. The [n]soldiers, therefore, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and the coat:* now the coat was [o]seamless, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore to one another, Let us not [p]rend it, but cast [q]lots for it, whose it shall be: that the [r]scripture might be fulfilled which saith, They parted my garments among themselves, and for my vesture they cast the lot. These things therefore the soldiers did.

4 (25-27): Human still.

4. Now there [s]stood by the cross of Jesus his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and

* Or, "tunic."

[j] Matt.27.37. Mk. 15. 26. Lk. 23. 38.
[k] *cf.*ch.4.42. *cf.* Acts 2. 7, 8.
[l] *cf.* ver. 7. *cf.*ch.18.37.
[m] *cf.* Num. 23. 19, 20.
[n] Matt. 27. 35. Mk. 15. 24. Lk. 23. 34.
[o] *cf.* Ex. 28. 31, 32. *cf.* Heb. 7. 26. *ctr.* Gen. 3. 7.
[p] *cf.* Lk. 5. 36. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 17.
[q] *cf.* Prov. 16. 33. *cf.*Eph.1.4.
[r] Ps. 22. 18.
[s] *cf.*Matt.27. 55, 56. Mk. 15. 40, 41. Lk. 23. 49.

between the saved and the unsaved, the Transformer of death into that which effects the transition from penalty to Paradise.

2. He comes thus into death as King,—"King of the Jews," indeed, but which in its full rendering implies so much. It faces the Jew, the Greek, the Roman, affirming to each in his own language, with a positiveness which His enemies vainly strive to set aside, a meaning for each one. Here is indeed God's King,—King in death as in life,—here in a peculiar way affirmed; His Cross henceforth to be the very sign of His power, the sceptre under which they bow, in adoring homage.

3. Now we see what indeed recalls the burnt-offering. This was flayed, that all beneath might be exposed, and its perfection seen. So now they strip the Lord, and expose Him. Here, in this Gospel alone, His seamless robe is spoken of, in figure that robe of righteousness which in Him was indeed seamless, but which now human hands have stripped from off Him, giving Him the malefactor's place instead. But how fully is He displayed by it in a righteousness which glorifies the righteousness of God itself, by penalty owned and taken in grace for others! It is not relaxed or modified, as many would teach, but taken in its full intensity of suffering; which alone would maintain the perfect righteousness of it. But thus He has a righteousness acquired as Man, which as Man He needs not. It is not His personal obedience in life, but in stooping to that which, because of His righteous life, *could* be no due of His. Thus it remains for the lot (which refers the whole disposal of it to the Lord) to decide whose it shall be. God has decided that it shall belong to the man of faith; and so the best robe in the Father's house is reserved for the returning prodigal; keeping nearer to what is before us here, let us say, to those who pierced His hands and feet, or drove the spear into His blessed side.

4. Amid it all, He has still the human tenderness which shows unchanged the Man Christ Jesus. His mother, standing by His cross, He commends to the care of His beloved disciple, the spiritual link being more than the natural, even while the natural is being recognized. Here, with one exception in the first chapter of Acts, we part with Mary; she is not mentioned in the after-books. In all the doctrine of the epistles she has no place. Blessed among women as she is surely by her connection with the human nature of our Lord, the entire

Mary of Magdala. Jesus, therefore, seeing his mother, and the [t]disciple whom he loved standing by, saith unto his mother, Woman, [u]behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

5 (28-30): "Finished."

5. After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now finished, [v]that the Scripture might be accomplished, saith, I thirst. There stood there a vessel full of [w]vinegar: so, binding to hyssop a sponge full of vinegar, they raised it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore received the vinegar, he said, It is [x]finished; and he bowed his head and [y]delivered up his spirit.

[t] ch. 18. 15.
[u] *cf.* ch. 2. 4. *cf.* ch. 21. 15-17.
[v] ver. 24, etc.
[w] *cf.* Ps. 69. 21.
[x] *cf.* ch. 4. 34. *cf.* ch. 17. 4. *cf.* Heb. 10. 5-10.
[y] *cf.* Rom. 10. 4. *cf.* Gal. 3. 13. *cf.* Rom. 4. 4, 5. *cf.* Matt. 27. 50. *cf.* Mk. 15. 37; *cf.* Lev. 1. 1-9.

silence of Scripture as to her in that fulness of Christian truth which it was the office of the Spirit of truth to communicate is the decisive overthrow of the whole Babel-structure of Mariolatry which Romanism has built up upon a mere sand-foundation. She remains for us in the word of God, a simple woman rejoicing in God her Saviour,—a stone in the temple to His praise, and with no temple of her own. To use the grace of the Redeemer in taking flesh among us by her means to exalt the mother to the dishonor of Christ her Lord is truly a refined wickedness worthy of the arch-deceiver of mankind.

5. We find now the divine end reached, and as it only could be, by the divine way; the Lord Himself here declares the perfect accomplishment of all that Scripture has foretold, save one thing only, and in death, as in life, Scripture is for Him the authoritative word of the living God. As in the temptation He had refused to minister to His own need, apart from that by every word of which, He declared, man lives, so now, on the same principle, He makes known that need, *not* that it might be ministered to, but *that Scripture might be fulfilled.* He does not Himself fulfil it; God can be trusted to take care for that; but He gives utterance to the distress which will as uttered occasion the fulfilment. The terrible thirst of crucifixion is upon Him; but that is not enough to force the parched lips to speech; but it is written, "In My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink:" this opens them. He will show Himself, as ever, in active obedience to the will of God, which He came to accomplish. He simply says, "I thirst:" and by the unsympathetic hands of those around His cross, the vinegar is tendered, and the prophecy fulfilled.

All is finished: and His own lips declare it. The very smallness, apparently, of this last matter cared for is absolute proof that no scripture whatever could be left as of no importance. The entire body of Old Testament prophecy is confirmed and certified with all the weight of Christ's authority. He had said before, "Scripture cannot be broken:" and we know exactly what for Him was "Scripture." Here, amid the intense sufferings of the cross, we see how completely He owned and was guided by it. That will of God which He came to do was here marked out for Him. The Law was in His heart; and in the very replacing of the Old Testament sacrifices by His one supreme sacrifice, (of which the psalm referred to speaks,) every part of this was honored and upheld. The Antitype necessarily confirmed the type He was displacing, and we have seen this in all the detail given us in the Gospels.

It is to His sacrificial work that the Lord undoubtedly has reference here. All scripture as to Himself was certainly not yet fulfilled; but the work of propitiation was accomplished, His words, of course, anticipating (as we have seen to be so much the character of the Gospel of John) the death which was now just before Him. The cup of wrath was, in fact, already drained, as the comparison of Mark and Luke fully assures us. The awful cry of forsaken sorrow which we find in the former has been already exchanged for the cry of "Father," with which the enjoyment of all that this endeared relationship implies has returned

SECTION 2. (Chap xix. 31-42.)
The Witness of Salvation.

1 (31-33): His righteousness affirmed.

1. THE Jews, therefore, since it was the [z]preparation, that the bodies might not remain upon the cross upon the sabbath (for that sabbath-day was a [a]great day) besought Pilate that their [b]legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. The soldiers, therefore, came and brake indeed the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with him; but when they came to Jesus and saw that he was [c]already dead, they brake not his legs.

2 (34-37): Expiation and cleansing in a dead Saviour.

2. But one of the soldiers with a spear [d]pierced his side, and immediately there came out [e]blood and [f]water. And he that saw it bare [g]witness, and his witness is true, and he knoweth that he saith what is true, that ye might [h]believe. For these things came to pass that the scripture might be fulfilled, A [i]bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, [j]They shall look on him whom they pierced.

z ver. 42.
a cf. Ex. 12. 16. *cf.*ch.16.20.
b cf. Deut. 21. 23.
*c cf.*ch.10.18.
d cf. ch. 20. 25-27.
e cf. 1 Jno. 1. 7. *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 6, 8.
f cf. Tit. 3.5. *cf.* Eph. 5. 26.
*g cf.*1 Jno.1. 1-3. *cf.*ch.21.24.
h ch. 20. 31.
i Ex. 12. 46. Num. 9.12. *cf.*Ps.34.20.
j Zech.12.10. *cf.*Rev.1.7.

also. Death remains yet, before full atonement is completed; for death *and* judgment are the double penalty upon man. Death, however, is governmental, not the necessary expression of divine holiness as against sin. Men may, therefore, die in the full favor of God; while the wrath of God would be impossible to be felt by one enjoying it. Death and the cup of wrath were both taken by the Lord; the latter first,—death following to complete the work; and thus now, at the moment of death, the Victor's cry, "It is finished." (See Introduction pp. 26–28.)

So He delivers up His spirit to the Father. We do not find Him, as in Luke, actually saying, "Father;" and this would seem more suited an utterance in the Gospel of the Manhood, than here, where (though not exclusively) the Only-begotten is set before us. Yet it is, as we know, to the Father that He commends it. Here He does not commend it, but delivers it up; He has power over it, as mere man has not; and the expression is stronger in this respect than that in Matthew, where the proper rendering is that "He *dismissed*" it. The expression in each Gospel is in the most perfect accordance with the character of each.

Sec. 2.

In the second section we have immediate witness to the salvation wrought; not the witness of men, as in the centurion in the other Gospels, but that of the divine word, that is, God's own testimony. This is what best suits John, as should be evident; the witness of the Spirit also being given in a special way: the Spirit, the water, and the blood unite together to declare that "God hath given us eternal life: and this life is in His Son."

1. First, we have the testimony of His perfect righteousness: He is the One fulfilling absolutely the Psalmist's words as to the righteous (Ps. xxxiv. 20), that Jehovah "keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken." The shield thrown over Him is made more manifest by the commandment given as to those crucified here, that their legs should be broken, and they should be taken away. This is carried out as to the two malefactors; but with the Lord, His work accomplished, men have no more power over Him; there must be now no marring of even the outward form that has enshrined the symmetry of the spirit within. But this connects also with the paschal ordinance concerning the lamb, that "they shall not break a bone of it." Here the rough, untutored hands of lawless men religiously respect the legal ordinance, and declare the Christ they know not the Fulfiller of this redemption type. It is a testimony to His Person,

3 (38-42): Worshipping remembrance.

3. Now, after these things, [k]Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but [l]secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him leave. He came, therefore, and took away his body. And there came also [m]Nicodemus (who at first came to him by night) bringing a mixture of [n]myrrh and aloes about a hundred pounds weight. They took therefore the body of Jesus, and [o]wound it in linen clothes with spices, as is the custom of the Jews to bury. Now there was in the place where he was crucified a [p]garden; and in the garden a new sepulcre, wherein was man [q]never yet laid. There, therefore, they laid Jesus because of the Jews' preparation, because the sepulcre was near at hand.

k Matt. 27. 57-61. Mk. 15. 42-47. Lk. 23. 50-56.
l *cf.* ch.7. 13. *cf.*ch.12.42.
m ch. 3. 2. ch. 7. 50.
n *cf.*Ps.45.8. *cf.* Song. 4. 14.
o *cf.* ch. 11. 44. *cf.* ch.20. 7.
p *cf.*Gen.2.8. *cf.* ch. 18.1. *cf.*Rev.2.7.
q *cf.* Mk.11. 2. *cf.* Josh. 3. 3, 4. *cf.* Is. 53. 9.

SUBDIVISION 3. (Chaps. xx., xxi.)

The Apocalypse of Resurrection.

SECTION 1. (Chap. xx. 1-10.)

Alive!

AND on the [r]first day of the week cometh [s]Mary of Magdala early, while it was yet dark, unto the sepulcre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulcre. She runneth, therefore, and cometh to Simon

r Matt.28.1, etc. Mk. 16. 1, etc. Lk. 24. 1, etc.
s *cf.* Mk. 16. 9.

as the next to come before us is a testimony to His work. It is the unblemished lamb that can alone be offered, and therefore the order is perfect here as elsewhere.

2. That which is bidden is not done; while that which is not bidden is done: for all is under higher government than man's. The word of God rules everywhere among and by means of those ignorant and those hostile. The thrust of the soldier's spear certifies the death so necessary to us against all docetism, while the act of hatred brings forth the answer of divine love,—the certification of redemption wrought. Out of Christ, as the riven Rock, flow the streams of spiritual healing; not water alone, as the apostle comments for us, but water and blood. The miraculous nature of the flow is clear from the way that it is insisted on,—the positive truth of it reiterated, the observation of the beloved disciple certified to us in his epistle afterwards as the witness of the Spirit of God. We want, therefore, no naturalistic explanations of a divine work on our behalf, "that ye might believe." Cleansing as well as expiation for men requires the death of Christ. The fulness of spiritual meaning we must seek where the apostle developes it, in his first epistle.

Israel are yet to look upon Him whom they have pierced, as the evangelist reminds us; and then a fountain will be opened to them for sin and for uncleanness. When they find the rift in the Rock, they will find the stream that flows from it: for them as for us, out of the heart of Christ.

3. No wonder that His body is wrapped in the spices now. Soon to rise, as He is, yet His death abides ever in the remembrance of His own in sweet and sacred significance. Blessed it is to see the timid becoming bold under its influence. Nicodemus is here with his hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes, to rival Joseph in his testimony of honor and affection for Him who has transformed death by His subjection to it. Only John mentions the great amount of spices, and that it is a garden in which is sown this seed of immortal life. While He is in the tomb, the Jews have their "preparation day," and a mockery of sabbath-rest. Of the reality of rest that has been wrought out for them, they are ignorant altogether.

Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have [t]taken away the Lord out of the sepulcre, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and the other disciple, and came to the sepulcre. And they ran both together, and the [u]other disciple outran Peter, and came first to the sepulcre. And, stooping down, he seeth the linen clothes lying, yet went he not in. Simon Peter cometh therefore also, following him, and [v]went into the sepulcre, and beholdeth the [w]linen clothes lying, and the [x]napkin that was upon his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in therefore the other disciple also, who came first to the sepulcre; and he saw and [y]believed; for yet they knew not the [z]scripture, that he must rise from among the dead. So the disciples [a]went away again unto their own home.

t vers.11-13. *cf.* Lk.24.21.
u ch. 21. 20.
v *cf.* ch.21.7.
w ch. 19. 40. *cf.* Eph.4.8.
x *ctr.* ch.11. 44.
y *cf.* ver. 31. *cf.* ch.21. 7.
z *cf.* Lk. 24. 24–26. *ctr.* Acts 2. 24–32.
a *cf.*ch.21.3.

SUBD. 3.

We may well entitle this last portion of the Gospel "the Apocalypse of Resurrection." No evangelist dwells upon this as John does. And though the cloud of unbelief is seen, which, in fact, clung to the disciples in these days of sorrow, and through which the glory dawning had to make its way, yet we are not allowed to be in the shadow of it, as is so much the case in Luke. We are not left so much at the threshold of the blessing, but conducted in. And thus, as it would seem, John, rather than Peter, is to abide with us, (though not, as the disciples thought, in personal presence, but in the truth committed to him) until the Lord's return.

Sec. 1.

The sabbath of the old creation passes in gloom and sorrow; the first day of the new week comes, and with it the First-born from among the dead, the Head of a new creation, abiding in the power of His immortal life. We have nothing of the futile guarding of the tomb, unworthy of record even here. The stone is rolled away; the sepulcre empty! No thought of the truth, however, flashes upon the mind of the early visitor who marks it all only as announcing a new calamity. They have taken her dead Lord out of the sepulcre; still and ever her Lord, though her heart be buried with Him. She runs with her burden of grief to pour it out to those as credulous in unbelief as she is; and Peter and John run back to the tomb, to find in the peace and order there the assurance that the absence of Christ's body from the place where reverent hands had laid it is not the work of man at all, but that He is truly risen from the dead. Scripture doctrine as to it they know of none:—only a resurrection at the last day, which was the orthodox faith that we have heard expressed by Martha. They themselves had questioned, as to what He had said about Himself, "what the rising from the dead should be." Still such a distinct special resurrection was a mystery to them; but the fact they were now convinced of: He was risen. They have thus lost interest in the sepulcre with its shadow,—still perplexed as they may be:—they go home.

But the first day of the week has found significance in a new beginning, beyond death which is the stamp upon the old creation,—the brand upon a fallen world. Man in Him has entered upon a new scene free from this; and they are linked with Him in it, though as yet they may not be able to define the place they have, or the nature of their link with Him. Nor have they as yet seen Him; nor has a word reached them from that unseen region into which He has entered.

SECTION 2. (Chap. xx. 11-18.)
Relationship in the new life.

BUT Mary stood [b]weeping at the sepulcre, outside; so, as she wept, she stooped, [and looked] into the sepulcre, and beholdeth two [c]angels in white sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have [d]taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And having said these things, she turned back, and beholdeth Jesus standing, and [e]knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? [f]whom seekest thou? She, supposing that it was the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, [g]Mary. She turned and saith unto him in Hebrew, Rabboni: which is to say, Teacher. Jesus saith unto her, [h]Lay not hold upon me; for I have not yet [i]ascended to my Father; but go unto my [j]brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto [k]my Father, and [l]your Father, unto my God, and your God. Mary of Magdala cometh and bringeth [m]tidings to the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

b ver. 13.
c *cf.* Lk. 24. 4.
d *cf.* Song 3. 2.
e *cf.* Lk. 24. 16.
f *cf.* ch. 1. 38. *ctr.* ch. 18. 4.
g *cf.* ch. 10. 3.
h *ctr.* Matt. 28. 9. *cf.* 2 Cor. 5. 16.
i Lk. 24. 51. *cf.* Heb. 4. 14, 15.
j *cf.* Heb. 2. 11.
k *cf.* ch. 17. 11.
l *cf.* Gal. 4. 6.
m *cf.* Lk. 24. 10, 11.

Sec. 2.

They go home, cheered though perplexed, to await what needs must follow. But there is one who cannot leave the place where she had last seen (though in what circumstances of distress) her Lord and Saviour. She has followed back to the sepulcre the quicker steps of the two men: coming too late, as it would seem, to learn from them the confidence they had gathered. Her own sight is too much dimmed with irrepressible tears, to gather it where they have done. Of resurrection, save at the far-off end-time, she has no expectation. But her heart clings, with a tenacity that nothing can divert or weaken, even to the Dead, by whose death she is desolate, but who survives in those indestructible memories which support and sadly light her through the gloom. Now she stands weeping outside the sepulcre, and, stooping down, looks into it. Was it a sight to prepare her for what would else have been too overwhelming a joy? Two angels in white are sitting, one at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. They sit in peaceful contemplation of the place now vacant, and ask why she should be weeping, and whom she was seeking there. Absorbed with her one object, however, she seems scarcely to recognize the strangeness of the vision, but answers with the same story she had brought to the disciples, that men had taken away her Lord! Then she turns away again on a quest from which the presence of angels cannot distract her, to find, though she knows it not, Jesus Himself before her.

Spite of her ignorance,—spite of the unbelief which was in that ignorance,—Mary it was who was to be the first witness of His resurrection, the first evangelist of the new order of things which is established by it. A woman's heart had anointed Him for His burial; and this He would proclaim wherever the gospel should go out. Now again a woman's heart, more devoted than His foremost disciples, is to carry, in the energy of its new-born gladness, the message that has gladdened it to these, and to become, as it were, the apostle to apostles! How it tells us of the way in which the heart becomes the leader of the

SECTION 3. (Chap. xx. 19-23.)

The heavenly company, and their spiritual endowment.

WHEN, therefore, it was evening on that day, the [n]first of the week, and the [o]doors being shut where the disciples were, for [p]fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the [q]midst, and saith unto them, [r]Peace be unto you. And having said this, he [s]showed unto them both his hands and his side. The disciples there-

n cf. Acts 20. 7. *cf.* Rev. 1. 10.
o cf. Gen. 45. 1. *cf.* Rev. 1. 9.
p cf. ch. 19. 38. *cf.* Acts 12. 12-17.
q ver. 26.
cf. Matt. 18. 20. *r* ch. 14. 27; *cf.* Eph. 2. 17. *s cf.* Col. 1. 20; Lk. 24. 40.

mind into the truth of God, and of the displacement of mere officialism in the Christian order.

Yet, after all, how little had Mary appreciated the One she loved with such heart-felt devotion! and her unbelief it is that, as with those upon the road to Emmaus afterward, holds her eyes when at first she sees the so eagerly desired object. He has to repeat to her the angels' question, why she is weeping, and *whom* she is seeking there among the dead. Can she indeed be so dull? Can we, alas, who have so much less excuse than Mary? How much of our sorrow which seems most to spring from our love of Him, is yet due in fact to our little appreciation of Him? Do we not also seek the Living One as if He were dead, and dishonor Him in our very worship of Him? Thus Mary repeats her wail to her unknown Lord Himself, and can take Him for the gardener, whose Voice had freed her once from the sevenfold power of the enemy which held her. Yet withal what a right she doubts not she has in Him, whom she seems to think the whole world must know at once: "Sir, if thou hast borne *Him* hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away!" But the Good Shepherd calls His sheep by name, and they know His Voice. He recalls her to herself, and so to Himself: "Mary!" and her heart is at rest. "Rabboni," she says; that is, "Teacher!" How blessed to learn, at His feet, like this!

She learns, not only that He is risen, but of a relationship that His resurrection has brought His people into. He is not ashamed to call them "brethren," and in the recognition of that which His work has done for them, and which is theirs in the life they have in Him, He ascends to His Father and their Father, to His God and to theirs. Mary must not, therefore, think to hold Him, as her love would desire; while the purpose of God is revealing itself in fuller and higher blessing than ever known before.

He had never yet called His disciples "brethren;" although this was the fulfillment of what had been prophetically announced long since. The sin-offering psalm (Ps. xxii.), which so fully depicts the sufferings through which Messiah was to pass, gives us from the lips of the same Sufferer, when delivered, the assurance, "I will declare Thy name unto My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will praise Thee." We have heard, accordingly, already that declaration of the Father's name, on which, in His final prayer before His betrayal, He so dwells. The relationship to Himself, and so to the Father, which is implied on their part, is only now for the first time explicitly made known. Himself as man the "First-born among many brethren," yet, except the Corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. Thus He is straitened till it be accomplished, and only now can the full reality be told out. As has been often noticed, He cannot, however, put them upon the same level with Himself. He does not say, "*Our* Father," but "My Father and yours;" He maintains the place which of necessity belongs to Him, while giving them their own upon the basis of this.

Sec. 3.

It is practically, therefore, as the First-born among many brethren that Mary's message announces Him. And now we find Him in the midst of the assembly, the blessing still enlarging as He declares it to them. There is nothing indeed about the Church in this Gospel, whether as the House of God or the Body of

fore were [t]glad, when they saw the Lord. Jesus said therefore unto them again, Peace be unto you: [u]as the Father sent me forth, I also send you. And having said this, he [v]breathed into them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the [w]Holy Spirit: whosoever sins ye [z]remit, they are remitted unto them: whosoever ye [y]retain, they are retained.

t ch. 16. 22. *cf.* 1 Pet. 1. 3, 8.
u ch. 17. 18. *cf.* Matt. 28. 18-20.
v *cf.* Gen. 2. 7. *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 45.
w *cf.* ch. 7. 39. *cf.* Lk. 24.

49. *x cf.* Matt. 16. 19; *cf.* Matt. 18. 18; *cf.* Acts 22. 16. *y cf.* Acts 5. 3-10; *cf.* 1 Cor. 5. 11-13.

Christ. In John we have only the Family of God, as far as doctrine goes, the line of truth which is plainly in natural connection with that of eternal life so characteristic of the Gospel. With this is found that of the indwelling Spirit, which gives to the life itself, always belonging to the children of God, its "abundant" blessedness. These are the connected truths all through, which connect with every other. We shall find them in this closing portion as elsewhere.

The evening of the first day of the week is come, and the disciples are gathered together. Let us note that this is either not reckoned in the Jewish manner, or else it is the *closing* evening of the Jewish day, which was from the decline of the day to sunset. Sunset was thus "between the evenings," which was the time when the passover lamb was offered, as well as the daily evening sacrifice (Ex. xii. 6; xxx. 8). At this time, then, were the disciples gathered; the doors being shut for fear of the Jews; the world being armed against the Prince of peace. But no shut doors can keep Him from His own; and presently He is among them: "Jesus came and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you." More than words, even of the Son of God, were needed to convey this. His word had created the worlds: but for redemption, He had said Himself, "the Son of man *must* be lifted up." That divinest work of all had been accomplished, and He can show them still the proofs of it in His hands and side. John says nothing of their unseemly fear, but of the joy into which it passed: "then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord."

And again He says, "Peace be to you," and sends them out into the world, to represent Him in it, as He had been sent into it to represent the Father. They belonged no more to it, as He had said to them before:—no more than He did. The world could not be at peace, nor those whose hearts were in it. They had been delivered from the corruption that was in it through lust, by the knowledge of Himself whom the world had rejected. Their portion was outside of it with Him: and thus they would be competent witnesses of that better part, and for Him who had enriched them with it from His voluntary poverty.

He follows these words with a significant action, breathing into them, and saying, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit;" with regard to which both the words and action have received various interpretation. We must, therefore, examine them with some care, the more because the symbolic action seems undoubtedly to point to something beyond the present capacity of the disciples to understand,—something, therefore, left to come to light afterwards. He does not Himself interpret His action, except the words accompanying are that interpretation. And this they can hardly be, much as they throw light upon it. We are left, therefore, to the natural significance of what is given us, seen in the light of truth revealed elsewhere, remembering that no parable can be authority for doctrine.

After all, the Lord's breathing into them carries us necessarily back to the inbreathing of God into the first man. The very word used here, and which occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, is that used in the Septuagint for this primal act, by virtue of which Adam became a living soul. Here then should be a new beginning of life, which, as such, must be from God, but from God incarnate; and with this we are already familiar, as truth that He Himself has taught us, that "as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the

SECTION 4. (Chap. xx. 24–31.)
A glance at the earthly company.

BUT [z]Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not [a]with them when Jesus came. The other disciples, therefore, said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I [b]see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not be-

z ch. 11. 16.
a *cf.* Num. 9. 13. *cf.* Heb. 10. 25.
b *cf.* ch. 4. 48. *cf.* Zech. 12. 10.

Son to have life in Himself;" so that, "as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, so the Son quickeneth whom He will" (chap. v. 21, 26). The Son is thus a true fountain of life for men, and, as the words declare, a divine life.

We cannot but connect this with a title given to the Lord, though not in John, of "Last Adam" (1 Cor. xv. 45): "The Last Adam is made a quickening Spirit." The contrast between the first and the Last, which we realize in His present action, is recognized and emphasized here. He is not Himself breathed into, as was the first man, but breathes into others. As the quickening Spirit, He communicates spiritual, divine life, such as we have seen to be the essential element in new birth. He is thus the Author of what is a new creation, higher in character than the old; and this is clearly what is symbolized in His present action.

Its place with reference to His work now finished is just as evident. He has told us already that, "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Here, then, is this now from the other side declared. It is not, as sometimes put, a question of *union*, but of what is more fundamental than this. The fruit of the corn of wheat is that of life communicated, but which passes through what both the Lord and His apostle afterwards call "death" to produce it (chap. xii. 24; 1 Cor. xv. 36). It is now, therefore, that He takes openly the place of the Last Adam. Life must come to man out of death, and in no other way; for death is the penalty of sin, and he is a sinner. But thus also, as springing out of this, vicariously endured, it comes accompanied with the efficacy of atonement made: he who receives it "*hath* eternal life, and doth not come into judgment, but is passed out of death into life" (chap. v. 24). The fundamental truths of the Gospel of John are thus embodied in this inbreathing by the risen Saviour.

But then it is, necessarily, of something that His disciples have before received that He is speaking to them in it. The giving of life could not actually wait for His resurrection. The Cross, standing amid the ages, looks backward as well as forward. And the Lord, in speaking of His communication of the life in Him, takes care to assure us of this. "The hour is coming," He says, "*and now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live" (chap. v. 25). And when afterwards He speaks of what is (now) characteristic of eternal life,—that they "know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent," He declares at the same time that this knowledge they already had (chap. xvii. 6–8). There can be nothing plainer, then, than that the Lord is not here communicating to His disciples what they had not received before, but that He is simply putting together in this symbolic manner things that were, in fact, already theirs. Every thing is emerging now from the obscurity of Moses' veil (2 Cor. iii. 13) into the open glory of Christ's face unveiled.

Now when the Lord goes on to say in plain speech, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit," it should be as plain that He is not interpreting the past, but speaking of something they had not yet received. The evangelist, when reporting to us His words at the feast of tabernacles as to the "living water," remarks that "this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him should receive;" and then he adds, "for the Holy Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified." Here, as far as words can show it, the same reception of the Spirit

lieve. And after eight days, his disciples were again within, and Thomas with them: Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and saith, [c]Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, [d]Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and put it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. Thomas answered and said unto him, [e]My Lord and my God! Jesus saith unto him, Because thou hast [f]seen me thou hast believed; [g]blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed.

c ver. 19.
d *cf.* ver. 20.
e *cf.* ch. 1. 1, 49. *cf.* ch. 9. 35-38. *cf.* Phil. 2. 10, 11.
f ver. 25.
g *cf.* Rom. 4. 18-20.

is spoken of. But here also a time is given before which the Spirit could not be received. Jesus must be first glorified, says the apostle. If, then, the Lord was not yet glorified at the time in which He uttered the words we are considering, these must still have had a reference to the future: that is, to that Pentecostal gift of the Spirit, to which, perhaps, we should be naturally inclined to refer them.

Now, when we remember the Lord's previous declaration that He must go away to the Father, or else the Advocate would not come to them (chap. xvi. 7), there can be no right question that this glorifying of Jesus was His being glorified with the glory which He had with the Father before the world was (chap. xvii. 5). The fact, then, that He was upon earth when now speaking to them would be sufficient proof that the reception of the Spirit, of which He was speaking was, in fact, Pentecostal. Yet it has been imagined even that the Lord had already ascended to the Father between the time when He had said to Mary that He had not yet done so and His being here in the midst! For, they say, He forbade Mary to touch Him, because not ascended, while here and elsewhere He freely permits it. But this is simply a misinterpretation of His words to Mary, and His going to the Father is always spoken of as implying His absence from His people during the present time. Such an imaginary ascension, for which not a single direct scripture can be quoted, and which would displace that which is always spoken of as such, cannot possibly, therefore, be maintained.

But, we are told by others, the article should be omitted in the Lord's words here, and therefore they intimate, not the Spirit as personally coming at Pentecost, but a bestowment of spiritual energy simply, which raises the life communicated to its proper resurrection power. We are not yet arrived where this question can be fully discussed, which can only be in Romans, but the lack of scripture for it is the most fatal objection. As to the absence of the article, it is absent also in that which was just now quoted from the seventh chapter, where we must read, according to this, "for Holy Spirit," or, as many read, simply "Spirit was not yet." But this would then deny the possibility of any such bestowment before the Lord's ascension. This would be altogether fatal to any such interpretation. Besides which, the Holy Spirit, (or, if it be preferred, simply Holy Spirit) cannot be shown to be anywhere identified with life, or any degree of it. I am aware that "the Spirit is life" (Rom. viii. 10) may be cited against me; but that is plainly the personal Spirit. The only proper force of the words, therefore, is that the Spirit is life potentially,—is the Source of it,—to the children of God. The Spirit does not stand there for the life: nor for any grade or character of life; all the more surely, that it *gives* it character.

"Receive ye the Holy Spirit," means, then, simply what it says, and cannot be the interpretation of the inbreathing which precedes the words, and which do evidently speak of the giving of life; not, however, of a communication of it there and then, but of one they had already received, and by which they had become a new creation. Creation is not an increase of life, but a beginning of it, as is plain. They had received life, as we have seen, and *eternal* life. It is now seen as bringing them into new creation, delivering them therefore from

Yea, and many [h]other signs also did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that ye may [i]believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have [j]life through his name.

[h] ch. 21. 25.
[i] *cf.* ch. 11. 15.
[j] ch. 3. 15, 16. *cf.* 1 Jno. 5. 10-12.

the old; and so from sin and judgment, as connected with it. Now they are qualified to receive the Spirit, to be the power indeed of the new life as resurrection life, with the value of Christ's blessed work for God attaching to it.

Sin is thus for them put away: they belong to a Kingdom of life and not of death, and of righteousness as inseparably connected with this. They are to be representatives of this now upon earth, remitting or retaining sins in His Name, and by His authority; not, surely, in relation to heaven and its blessedness, as has been monstrously claimed by the false church; but in relation to the sphere of His earthly interests. This is a seal upon the higher blessing into which He has introduced them; the reception of the Spirit being their qualification for it, and the condition therefore implied that they act in the power of that endowment.

Sec. 4.

Here then we have the heavenly company:—not exactly the Church; at least, not as the Body of Christ, or the House of God; things which are not in the line of the apostle's teaching. But the Spirit which they are to receive sufficiently marks them out as those who, in fact, belong to that which is the gathering together of the children of God, before scattered abroad (chap. xi. 52). But we have seen also that John cannot forget (or the Spirit of God as speaking through him) that there are promises of blessing for the earth, and therefore to an earthly people, which He will fulfil in their entirety to them. We have had glances at this already, again and again, and now we have another. Thomas, called Didymus, (both names meaning "a twin,") though one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. We may easily believe that the unbelief which he so conspicuously exhibits, may have hindered his being with them at that memorable time. How many glorious opportunities do we not lose from such a cause? Not even the testimony of all the others is sufficient to make him credit so marvelous a tale. Like Israel, he must look upon the Pierced One, or he will not believe. The week passes, therefore, with Thomas unbelieving still; just as the present time with Israel. But on the eighth day, the first of the new week, the disciples are again together, and now Thomas is with them: Jesus comes once more, the doors again being shut, and stands in the midst, and says again, "Peace be unto you." And now Thomas may satisfy himself; but he is broken down in adoring wonder: "My Lord and my God!" he exclaims, as, thank God, at last the nation will; but to find that he has lost, not time alone, but the higher blessing: "Thomas," says the Lord, "because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

The apostle adds here that the object of his writing was to awaken and encourage faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God; that thus men might have life in His Name. For this purpose, he had not attempted an impossible relation of all the signs that Jesus had done. These were innumerable: nor is a faith founded merely upon miracles a sufficient faith (chap. ii. 23–25). His aim had been that the divine glory of the Lord should appear; so that His Name—the display of Himself, might prove its power for this, as it alone could do. Acquaintance with the Son of God! Ah, is not this, indeed, the need we have, one and all? is it not here all need shall be supplied?

Sec. 5.

After the Jew is brought into blessing and the appearing of the Lord in their behalf, blessing will, as we know, go out to the nations, the judgments that are

SECTION 5. (Chap. xxi. 1-14.)

Man as man—the Gentile—with God.

AFTER these things Jesus manifested himself again to the disciples at the [k]sea of Tiberias: and in this manner he manifested himself. There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael who was of [l]Cana of Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a [m]fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth and entered into the ship, and that night they caught [n]nothing. And when the [o]morning was already coming on, Jesus stood on the shore: the disciples however [p]knew not that it was Jesus. Therefore Jesus saith unto them, Children,* have ye any thing to eat? They answered him, No. And he said unto them, [q]Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the [r]Lord. When, therefore, Simon Peter, heard that it was the Lord, he girded on his outer garment, (for he was naked) and [s]cast himself into the sea; and the other disciples came in the boat, (for they were not far from land, but only about two hundred cubits), dragging the net of fishes.

k ch. 6. 1.

l ch. 2. 1.

m *cf.* ch. 20. 10. *ctr.* Acts 6. 2.

n *cf.* Lk. 5. 3-7.

o *cf.* 1 Jno. 2. 8.

p ch. 20. 14.

q *cf.* ch. 9. 7.

r *cf.* Lk. 24. 30, 31.

s *cf.* ch. 20. 6. *cf.* ch. 13. 37.

* The form of the question suggests a negative answer.

inflicted upon the world preparing the way for this, as the prophet says, "When Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. xxvi. 9). Restored Israel will then be the centre from which living waters will go forth to water the earth; and, as their casting away has been for the reconciling of the world, the receiving of them shall be, in the words of the apostle, "life from the dead" (Rom. xi. 15). To this the closing scenes in this Gospel now carry us on, in what has evidently the character of a supplementary part. For, as another has remarked, here "we find ourselves upon the ground of the historic Gospels; that is to say, that the miracle of the draught of fishes identifies itself with the work of Christ on earth, and is in the sphere of His former association with His disciples. It is Galilee, not Bethany. It has not the usual character of the doctrine of this Gospel, which presents the divine Person of Jesus, outside all dispensation, here below; raising our thoughts above all such subjects. Here, at the end of the Gospel, the Evangelist comes for the first time on the ground of the synoptics, of the manifestation and coming fruits of Christ's connection with earth. Thus the application of the passage to this point is not merely an idea which the narrative suggests to the mind, but it rests upon the general teaching of the Word." (*Synopsis.*)

As in the final parable of the seven in Matt. xiii. the net is cast into the waters of the nations, those of the disciples in one way or another most prominently connected with Israel being foremost among the fishers now. Thus Peter, the leading apostle to the circumcision, is conspicuous all through. Next to him, we have Thomas named, and then Nathanael, both typical representatives of Israel in the latter days. The connection of Nathanael with Cana of Galilee, where the water was made wine, is noted also for the first time. Only the sons of Zebedee are named besides. Peter leads, but there is unsuccessful

As soon, therefore as they went on shore, they saw a [t]fire of coals there,* and fish lying thereon and bread. Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. Simon Peter, therefore, went on board and drew the net to land full of great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three; and although there were so many, the net was [u]not rent. Jesus saith unto them, [v]Come and dine.† But none of the disciples durst inquire of him, Who art thou? knowing it was the Lord. Jesus therefore cometh and [w]taketh the bread and giveth them, and the fish likewise. This is now the [z]third time that Jesus manifested himself to the disciples, after that he was risen from among the dead.

t *cf.* ch. 18. 18.
u *ctr.* Lk. 5. 6.
v *cf.* ch. 6. 10.
w *cf.* Lk. 24. 30, 31.
x *cf.* ch. 20. 19, 26.

* Literally, "lying." † Literally, "break your fast."

toiling through the night, until with the morning Jesus stands upon the shore. Then at His "Cast the net upon the right side of the ship, and ye shall find," they do find, acting upon His word, a great multitude of fishes. Yet it is noted that the net holds together: "Christ's millennial work is not marred. . . . That which He performs does not rest on man's responsibility as to its effect here below: the net does not break. Also, when the disciples bring of the fish that they have caught, the Lord has some already there. So shall it be on earth at the end. Before His manifestation He will have prepared a remnant for Himself upon the earth; but after His manifestation He will gather a multitude also from the sea of nations;" which "the sea of Tiberias," bearing the name of the Cæsar whom man has chosen for his king, may fitly image.

Peter, prominent all through, not only presents, as already said, the Jewish ministry which will be used in this, but it is to be remarked how in keeping with it is the work of restoration needed in his own soul. He also has denied his Master, as Israel has, and has to be brought back after such terrible failure, yet is put again into the place he might seem irretrievably to have lost.

Thus we see in this section man as man, apart from all covenant privilege, brought to God. Judgment itself will work out the purposes of grace; and thus also will it be seen that grace truly reigns: although that which is for God a "strange work" must still, alas! have its place, as we shall see clearly in the day that comes.

Sec. 6.

What follows now to the end of the Gospel takes a different turn. In it we may see, not obscurely, the foreshadow of the passing away of the ministry to the circumcision, Peter being still the representative of this, in contrast with John, who in his covers the whole interval until Christ's return. This requires to be looked into, however, while upon the surface may be seen the instructive history of a soul exercised under the tender but searching eye of Christ,—the exemplification of that process of cleansing to have part with Him, which He Himself has depicted for us under the symbol of feet-washing. This is fully in the line of John's special teaching, and its importance may well claim from us most earnest consideration.

The searching of Peter's soul which comes now before us is not the first step by any means towards his recovery. Evident as this is, it needs to be emphasized because of a very general mistake that is made with regard to it. The Lord's words to him in view of his sin, not yet committed, disclose, on the other hand, that which is the fundamental need of one who has fallen as he had. "I have prayed for thee," says He, "that thy *faith fail not.*" With our hand in His, in the self-distrust which is the fruit of true self-knowledge, we should be surely guided and safely guarded. In Peter we see, at the very time when the Lord's warning words are uttered, the indications of his danger: "Though

SECTION 6. (Chap. xxi. 15-19.)
Peter; the shortened Jewish Ministry.

So WHEN they had dined,* Jesus saith unto Simon Peter, [y]Simon, son of Jonas, lovest† thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou [z]knowest that I have affection‡ for thee. He saith unto him, [a]Feed my lambs. He saith unto him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I have affection for thee. He saith unto him, [b]Tend my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, hast thou affection for me? Peter was [c]grieved because he said unto him the third time, Hast

y *cf.* Matt. 26. 33.
z *cf.* ch. 2. 25.
a *cf.* 1 Pet. 2. 2. *cf.* Is. 40. 11.
b *cf.* 1 Pet. 5. 1-3. *cf.* Acts 20. 28.
c *cf.* ch. 13. 38.

* Literally, "breakfasted." † *Αγαπας*, a strong term.
‡ *φιλέω*, the love of friendship.

all should be offended," he says, "yet will I never be offended. I am ready to go with Thee to prison and to death." This is a condition which not only exposes one to fall, but for which the fall itself may be the only remedy. We have to learn that when we are weak only are we strong; and that Christ's strength is made perfect in weakness. Peter's case is a typical one; and thus it is so valuable for us. The Lord Himself, in such a case as this, cannot pray that Peter may not fall, but that he may be "converted" by it,—turned from that dangerous self-confidence to consciousness of his inability to trust himself, even for a moment. Here Satan is foiled and made to serve the purpose of that grace which he hates and resists. He can overpower this self-sufficient Peter; but only to fling him for refuge upon his omnipotent Lord. Just as "the messenger of Satan to buffet" Paul works for what he in no wise desires, to repress the pride so ready to spring up in us, and which the lifting up to the third heaven might tend to foster. Here there had been no fall, and all was overruled for fullest blessing; in Peter's case, on the other hand, Satan's effort would be to assail the fallen disciple with suggestions of a sin too great to be forgiven,—or, at least, for restoration to that eminent place from which it would be torture to remember he had fallen. What he needed to meet this was *faith;* and this, therefore, the Lord prays might not fail with him.

How careful is He to revive and strengthen in the humbled man the practical confidence so needful! The knowledge of it all given him before-hand,—of the prayer made for him,—of the exhortation addressed to him when restored, to "strengthen his brethren,"—all this would be balm indeed for his wounded soul; but even this was not enough for his compassionate Lord. The first message of His resurrection has to be addressed specially "to Peter," (Mk. xvi. 7,) and "to Cephas" himself He appears, before the twelve (1 Cor. xv. 5). Thus he will not shrink back when they are all seen together. When we find him now at the sea of Tiberias, it is easy to realize that all this has done its work. Told that it is the Lord who is there upon the shore, he girds on his outer garment, and casts himself into the sea, impatient to meet his Lord. But now it is he is ready, only now, for that so necessary dealing with his conscience, when his heart is fully assured. On the shore a fire of coals is burning, the only other time when we read of such a thing beside being when he had warmed himself at a similar one at that time which he never will forget. Yet it would seem as if Christ had forgotten it. He adds no word, but makes him sit down there in company with Himself and it,—a silent preacher, not the less effectual.

They have dined, and now the living Voice begins. Where does it begin? where the preacher to his conscience left it? No; not a word of this. Nothing is said for a moment about this fall; there is no charge,—scarcely, one would

thou affection for me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou [d]knowest all things; thou knowest that I have affection for thee. Jesus saith unto him, [e]Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither [f]thou wouldst, but when thou shalt be old thou shalt [g]stretch forth thy hands and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. And this he said, [h]signifying by what manner of death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he said unto him, [i]Follow me.

d *cf.* 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4.
e ver. 15. *cf.* ch. 10. 9.
f *cf.* vers. 3, 7.
g *cf.* ch. 19. 18.
h *cf.* 2 Pet. 1. 14.
i *cf.* Matt. 4. 19. *cf.* Matt. 16. 24.

say, a reminder—of what the preacher before had taken for his text. A quiet and a tender question it is now, and from One whose love has been more and more rising upon him, till now it is full day, brightness and warmth together. "Simon, son of Jonas," says the Voice now, with its familiar and yet ever growing fulness of meaning for him, "Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?"

One cannot help but see that the Lord is recalling to Peter, and yet not as if *He* would recall them, his fervent but boastful words, that, though *all* should be offended, yet *he* would not be. He will not charge him with them, but only let him himself recall them in the light of what deeper knowledge he has acquired, that he may now give judgment as to them. But Peter simply declines the comparison. He is content with affirming his love, though not in the terms of the question put. The Lord cannot allow it, therefore, to rest there, but repeats His question in a briefer and more pointed way. Peter again affirms, and again the Lord presses him upon his own chosen ground; and now Peter's heart bursts out: "Peter was grieved because He said unto him the third time, Lovest thou Me? And he said unto Him, Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee." This threefold repetition connects Peter's boastful affirmation with his repeated denials in the high priest's palace. Root and fruit are connected together, so that he may the better trace that connection, and Peter's answer testifies of the omniscience that has searched him out. "Lord," he says, "Thou knowest all things!" but that only deepens the conviction that while he had signally failed to manifest his love in outward act, yet He who knew all could read it in his heart.

The Lord's questions vary, however, more than we have yet taken into account. In the first two He uses a different word for "love" from that which He uses the third time, but which is that which Peter uses throughout. The latter is the term for affection, ardent and heartfelt, but, it may be, unintelligent and unappreciative also. The former is a love guided and sanctioned by a deliberate judgment. Both terms are used in a bad sense as well as a good, and the more discriminating and deliberate love is, the worse it is, if set upon evil. Yet this intelligent love which can give a reason to itself is otherwise the higher quality. It is the love of the spirit, as Scripture would put it, as Peter's word expresses that of the soul; and although the Father is said in both ways to love the Son, yet when it is said, "God is Love," the word used is necessarily the former.

The Lord then uses this higher term first, and descends afterwards to the lower, thus searching out Peter more and more. In the first place too, He adds, "more than these do," (the other disciples,) but then asks, "Dost thou love Me?" as if He would say, "at all?" And when Peter still urges his, "Thou knowest I have affection for Thee;" He at last takes him up even there, and asks, "*Hast* thou affection for Me?" Then the disciple's heart gushes out. Even this slighter "affection," alas! might be questioned now:—for had not mere friend braved and done more for friend than he for his Lord and Saviour? Yes, but He who knew all things would not judge him as men might. He dares not

SECTION 7. (Chap. xxi. 20-25.)
John completing the interval till the coming of Christ.

PETER, turning about, seeth the [j] disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, who is he that delivereth thee up? Peter, therefore, seeing him, saith unto Jesus, Lord, and [k] what as to this man? Jesus saith unto him, If I

[j] ch. 13. 23.

[k] *cf.* Rom. 4. 14. *cf.* Gal. 2. 7-9.

now say that he loves more than others,—dares profess nothing as to the quality of his love at all: let the Lord judge, who would not too severely;—who has not been driven from him by all that He has seen in him: yet, be it what it may, he *has* affection.

His self-judgment is complete. Searched out under the divine eye, he is found and owns himself, not better but worse than others, so self-ignorant that he cannot claim *quality* for his love at all; only something he is conscious of, which even so, in his utter failure to manifest it, omniscience alone might see.

The needed point is reached, the strong man converted to weakness is now fit to strengthen his brethren; and, as Peter descends step by step the ladder of humiliation, step by step the Lord follows him with assurance of the work for which he is destined. "Feed My lambs," He says, "tend My sheep," "feed My sheep." He, the faithful Shepherd, who could give His life for them, could yet confide these sheep, so dear to Him, into the hands of this humbled, ruined man. How sweet and assuring this grace to Simon Peter, as to us all! Now indeed he answers to his name: he is the "hearkener, son of the Dove," and is risen out of the ruin which will yet abide with him in cherished memory for ever. God, who is the God of resurrection, has performed this.

But the Lord does not even stop here. He goes back to that fervent protestation that Peter is ready to follow Him to prison and to death. He has missed his opportunity, but he shall retrieve it yet, and show what divine grace has indeed made Christ to be to him. Sealing it with His strong manner of affirmation, He declares, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not." "This spake He," says he who had been witness of it, "signifying by what death he should glorify God. And, when He had spoken this, He saith unto him, Follow Me."

In the strength of nature he had not been competent. Mere flesh and blood will ever fail in the battles of the Lord. Yet He who has enjoined upon us the taking forth the precious from the vile, knows how to discern amid whatever may be mingled with it that which is truly of Him. Peter shall regain his lost opportunity, and yet have the privilege accorded him of dying for his Saviour. As a veteran in such warfare, he shall die upon the battlefield, and follow Christ through the gateway by which He left the conflict for the eternal joy.

It is in the contrast with John which follows we are made to realize that Peter is here also the representative of that ministry to the circumcision which was, as we know, in a principal way committed to him. That ministry ended as a distinct thing with the scattering of the people when Jerusalem was taken and destroyed by the Romans. The times of possible restoration held out to them by the reception of the Crucified One, lengthened out by the longsuffering mercy of God for many years, though more and more realized as hopeless, was then ended in terrible judgment. Henceforth to the end of the times of the Gentiles, as our Lord announced, Jerusalem would be trodden down by them. While it is, of course, true that the gospel goes out to men everywhere, without distinction of persons, and that only "blindness in part" is happened to Israel, the nation as such is for the present set aside. The testimony characteristic of the time of God's longsuffering is therefore set aside also.

will that he abide [l]until I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me. This saying therefore went abroad among the brethren, that that disciple [m]was not to die; yet Jesus said not unto him, He is not to die; but, If I will that he abide until I come, what is that to thee?

This is the disciple who [n]testifieth of these things,

l *cf.* ch. 14.3. *cf.* 1 Thess. 1. 10. *cf.* 1 Thess. 5. 23.
m *cf.* 1 Cor. 15. 51. *cf.* 1 Thess. 4. 15, 17.
n ch. 15. 27. *cf.* ch. 19. 35.

Sec. 7.

We come now to the Lord's words as to John, which have for us a deeper concern. Peter, turning about, sees John following; and with a natural, but perhaps too merely human interest, asks, "Lord, and what as to this man?" He answers, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me." This saying, we learn, though put only in the form of a question, was taken by the disciples as intimating that that disciple therefore would not die; but that this was not really what the Lord had said. The apostle who writes this, and of whom it is written, knew apparently no more than the rest: he simply guards against what might be a misconception. That is impossible now; but it leaves the question for us still, what then did the Lord mean? Was it only a rebuke to Peter? Either it is that, or there must be, one would say, some way by which John could live on, other than personally, and which may explain the mysterious words.

It is simple enough to say that John lives on in his writings. But then it might be urged, that is only what all the inspired writers will; still it cannot but come to mind that, in fact, John's writings not only predict circumstantially the Lord's return, but stretch over all the intervening time till then. While he does not take us up into heaven, as Paul does, and show us our place in the glorified Man up there, yet all the more he seems to abide with the people of God on earth until Christ's return, as a human presence watching and caring for them. John may be thus truly said to be waiting with those on earth for his absent Lord in a way in which we could not speak of any other inspired writer.

Even his epistles declare the last time to be here, and while watching over the development of the life (which is, as we know, his great subject) in babes, young men, and fathers, gives them instruction as to Antichrist. His doctrine, in the Gospel and epistles, is a connecting link between Paul on the one hand, and those who treat of the practical walk, as do the writers of the other General Epistles. But he fills this, as no other, with the personal glory of Christ, the Only-begotten Son in the bosom of the Father.

He is thus really a conservative presence: binding Scripture and the brotherhood of Christians also into a unity that is power to "abide,"—a favorite word of his, and which the Lord uses as to himself. We need not wonder to read upon his golden belt the words which most of all are fundamental to a unity of life, a living unity,—

Light, and Love!

The apostle closes his Gospel with another reminder of the inadequacy of all human words to tell out His glory, of whom he has been speaking. If it were attempted to tell out all, the world would be unable to contain the books that would be written. It would be an impracticable load to lift, rather than a help to clearer apprehension. How thankful we may be for the moderation that has compressed what would be really blessing to us into such a moderate compass! which yet, as we all must know, develops into whatever largeness we may have capacity for. Our Bibles are thus the same, and quite manageable by any. On the other hand, are we burning to know more? we may go on without any limit, except that which our little faith or heart may impose. May God awaken our hearts to test for themselves the expansive power of Scripture, and whether

and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also [o]many other things that Jesus did, which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the [p]world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

o ch. 20. 30.
p *cf.* Eph. 3. 19. *cf.* 2 Cor. 3. 3 with Eph. 1. 22, 23.

we can find a limit anywhere! Like the inconceivable immensity of the heavens, ever increasing as the power of vision is lengthened, we go on to find that the further we go only the more does the thought of infinity rise upon us; but this infinity is filled with an Infinite Presence; in every leaf-blade, in every atom, yet transcending all His works; and "to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him."

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